1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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sun attached to another land above the one of which our sky is the underside. Boas (p. 28) has described this upper land in some detail. A number of Bella Coola were questioned on this subject, but for some time no one could be found with knowledge of its existence. At length one of the older people remembered that a man who had died some thirty years ago had a personal story connected with it, and later a Kimsquit man was able to furnish definite information. He explained that in his family there was a myth dealing with this matter; others might have heard this myth, but since it was not their property, of course they would not be able to impart the facts contained in it, nor would they necessarily believe it. Consequently, an upper land, superimposed above that which is immediately over the earth, cannot be described as a Bella Coola belief; it is shared, so far as could be ascertained, by only two families.

The chief feature of this uppermost world is its distance and unapproachableness. To the supernatural beings living in the intermediate land it is a far-off place; in fact, their attitude towards it corresponds to that with which mortals regard the land above their own. The supernatural ones can, when they wish, visit this upper world, which is called *Nuqwliāls*. A sun shines there, but it is a different kind of sun from that known to mortals. On the whole it appears that this upper sky-land does not differ materially from either the earth or the land immediately above. No human being has ever reached this distant land, so what little is known about it was brought down in the beginning of time by the first people.

In addition to these two upper worlds, the Bella Coola know of one, or perhaps two, below. One of these is inhabited by ghosts.[1] It somewhat resembles the earth, but is unsubstantial and ethereal. It is considered to be immediately

[1] At the present time the Bella Coola are in a state of transition between the old beliefs and the new. This concept is held only by the older people, so it might be more accurate to describe it as one which they, the tribe as a whole, used to know. It has been thought advisable to use the present tense throughout in recording customs and beliefs which are now rapidly passing away.

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beneath the Bella Coola valley, and the land of the living forms a dome over it corresponding to that of the sky over this world. But everything is reversed. A river flows in the land of ghosts, but it rises in the west instead of the east; when it is warm on this earth it is cold in the land below; when it is sunrise here, it is sunset there. Shamans are believed to have penetrated frequently to this land, and on information from them the Bella Coola base their beliefs.

There is another land beneath the ocean. In this live the fish and sea mammals in human form, as well as other beings to be described in the next section of this chapter. Like all other worlds it has a sun above it,[2] and conditions are said to be similar to those existing on this earth. The Bella Coola are uncertain whether this undersea world is at the same level as the land of ghosts, and whether or not it extends beneath the rivers.

Although Bella Coola concepts regarding the sun and other heavenly bodies will require further consideration, it will be convenient at this point to describe them in outline. The sun is regarded as a heat-radiating ball of such intensity that a human being cannot approach it. Its path, as it crosses the land above, varies from day to day until it reaches its limits at the solstices. As it travels, it is accompanied by the droning of two *Aiiilāxa*, supernatural feminine beings who remain continually, one in the east and one in the west. According to most informants, the ends of the sun's course, though fixed and invariable from year to year, are not marked by any visible means. Others state that at each limit there is the mouth of a *smnq*, a mythological animal of enormous size.

The moon is thought likewise to travel[1] each day but is said to be very cold. Few stories are current concerning it, although the Bella Coola say that long ago a man tried to reach it, only to be driven back by the intense cold. A shaman who died not many years ago claimed to have received power

[1] One informant stated that our sun served that purpose.
[2] The *Aiiilāxa* dress as it travels, as they do for the sun.

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773 hanging a number of bird and animal cloaks, representing ravens, eagles, whales, grizzly bears, black bears, and a few others. *Ălquntăm* asked each individual which of these cloaks he preferred to wear. One selected a raven, another an eagle, and so on. Each donned his choice from the wall and immediately became the bird or animal chosen. *Ălquntăm* gave each man or woman one or more names, and some food in compressed form; then sent him down in avian or mammal form. Even the animals could travel through the air like birds, and each landed on the peak of a mountain in the Bella Coola country, took off his cloak, and reassumed human form. The discarded coverings floated back up to *Nusmät·a*. A few individuals, instead of coming to earth in animal form, swarmed down posts which stretched between the worlds.

177 This myth is fervently believed by the Bella Coola. Even
773 Christian Indians, though they readily admit the biblical creation as applied to the white race, remain convinced of the manner in which their own ancestors came into being. At the present time, though most ancient beliefs are rapidly passing away, few, if any, Bella Coola doubt this account of the creation of their forefathers. Their conviction rests not only on the religious aspect of their life, but on the sociological. A man's
[551] most treasured possessions are the name brought down from
[424] above by his ancestor in the beginning of time, the knowledge of the form taken by that ancestor, and information about the place where he landed. A collection of myths of this kind is given in vol. I, chap. VI. Lacking knowledge of his first an-
[622] cestor's form, a Bella Coola has slight chance of becoming a
[554] chief; such lore is the birthright of every descendant of one of
[567] these first people, and those without it are almost certain to be the offspring of slaves. The social aspects of creation myths will be described later; at this point a broad outline must suffice. *Nusmät·a*, "The House of Myths," is the place in which these myths were made, and are now stored, two reasons for its importance in the eyes of the Bella Coola.

[775] *Nusmät·a* is not only connected with the history of an indi-

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vidual's ancestors; it enters into his own future as well. When a Bella Coola dies, his spirit (I, p. 94) travels back on the path of his ancestors from generation to generation until it reaches the spot where the first one came to earth; there it assumes the bird or animal cloak used on that occasion and floats aloft to *Nusmät·a* to live forever. Small wonder, therefore, that this house figures prominently in the thoughts of the Bella Coola, and that they cling tenaciously to a belief in it.

Knowledge of *Nusmät·a* has been inherited almost entirely from the first ancestors of the Bella Coola, and only a few items of information could be gleaned concerning it. Most men think of it as an enormous replica of their own houses, but one individual, of philosophic temperament, expressed the opinion that it was without any inner partitions. His belief was based on the following incident:

Some years ago a young man died without apparent reason. His sorrowing father kept wondering:

"Why has my son died? Can he have committed some crime or made some mistake?"

Despondent and grief-stricken, for a whole year the man did not wash, ate little, and slept on the floor. At last he wandered away, alone, into the mountains. Night overtook him and he lay down to sleep without food. His son came to him in a dream, telling him not to lament, that he was in a better place than this world, for *Älqunïdm* had recalled him to *Nusmät·a* to use his voice, which was unusually powerful, as a means of conveying his wishes to the other occupants of the house. Thus comforted, the father returned home in the morning, washed, and again behaved normally. My informant suggested that cross walls would be a bar to the strongest voice, and that *Nusmät·a* must consequently be partitionless.

Nusmät·a contains not only the spirits of all deceased Bella Coola, it is also the home of most of the supernatural beings. These frequently descend to visit the earth, but always return to the house above. So far as could be learnt, the only being irremovably located there is an old woman, *Snulquiyäls*. The most prominent article of furniture in *Nusmät·a* is *Älqunïdm*'s seat, in the central position behind the fire. Over it is laid

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the top. He concluded that this must be the home of the woman. Before the door of her house, wherever it may be, there are miniature totem-poles which open their painted mouths and speak in the voice of the animal or bird portrayed. The writer did not hear that her home was in the land above *Nusmāt·a*, as Boas (p. 28) states. At the present time knowledge of *Kāmai·ts* is so scanty that failure to confirm the previous observation is not surprising.

One or two passing remarks of elderly informants imply that *Kāmai·ts* may once have been more important to Bella Coola belief than she is now. One old man, already in his dotage, stated that long ago the dead used to dwell in her house. Another declared that long ago prayers were addressed to her, which is never done now. The word *kāmai·ts* is commonly used by the Bella Coola in a manner difficult to translate. It serves as equivalent for "please" or "thank you," but has an underlying significance of a supernatural benison or appeal. It is not a word to be used in casual conversation; it is reserved for important occasions or times of emotional stress. The comparative unimportance of *Kāmai·ts* probably rests on the fact that she belongs merely to the realm of ancient history and has no sociological significance, even as the patron of a *kusiut* dancer.

Another supernatural being so far removed from this world that he enters but little into the lives of the Bella Coola is *Sninia*. He is the male being whom *Ālquntām* sent down from above in the beginning of time to hold the earth in position, and who has since performed this duty. He lives among the ice of the far north, and has not been seen by mortals for many generations. He holds a rope fastened to the earth; when he is afraid that it has slipped slightly he takes a new grip and pulls the rope taut, pressing the world against the soles of his feet as he sits with legs extended, as a man would do to hold tight a kicking salmon. It is the tightening of the rope which causes an earthquake. If *Sninia* should lose his grip entirely the earth would capsize. He is patron for several *kusiut* dancers.

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of the ocean, one of the members is awakened by the rhythmical beat of the paddles of the War-Party of the Tide. If he is wise he at once calls out, "*Hi*...." This serves to keep the War-Party at a distance, and to waken the rest of the party who hastily throw on the fire objects which have been in contact with the human body.

Many stories are told by the Bella Coola of the appearance of the War-Party of the Tide. The following can be regarded as typical.

A few years ago, a hunter named *Onikotl*, and his wife, *Ànuqwiàls*, were encamped on Labouchere Channel at the point known as *Nusqwl*, near the Hot Springs. They were discussing a private matter when, to the amazement of both, their dog, who was with them, joined in the conversation. This unnatural behaviour should have warned them of approaching danger and they ought to have killed the animal, as indeed the woman desired to do. But *Onikotl* foolishly refused and presently they lay down to sleep. In some mysterious manner the dog was able to summon the War-Party of the Tide, which carried the two away. When they awoke they were in the dread canoe, and the poison from *Sxlo·xl*ᵘ was spreading over them. They were powerless and could only lie still as the canoe travelled up South Bentinck Arm, circled the island near *Tăl·io* at its head, and three other islands on the return journey. The two were put ashore at their camp, apparently unharmed, but they knew the danger to which they had been exposed and fled next day to Kimsquit. The woman told a shaman what had happened and accepted his somewhat drastic treatments. Consequently, though she showed signs of insanity, she was cured. The headstrong *Onikotl*, on the other hand, refused to pay attention to the danger; within a few weeks he became crazy, and then died.

Quite another category of Bella Coola supernatural beings consists of ghosts. These beings, once human, have passed by death into the ranks of the supernatural. Their home is the land below the earth, where they live like mortals except that everything is strange and ethereal. In form they resemble human beings, but their faces are green and weird. They can visit the land of the living at will, and make their presence known by whistling, which is their language. Their actions are the reverse of those of humans; for example, they often

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775 walk backwards, or on their heads. Mortals sometimes see ghosts, but the apparition seals their lips so that they cannot [761] recount their experiences. Death invariably follows. Shamans [756] and other mortals endowed with great powers have been able to penetrate to the realm below, and the knowledge of conditions there has been derived from their accounts. Food is scarce in that land and ghosts are often driven up to earth to 264 search for it. Even a small morsel is enough to satisfy their 775 hunger, so that mortals throw fragments on the fire for the benefit of their dead relatives. If a person drop a crumb it is because a ghost has hooked it away from his hand; no wise Bella Coola ever picks up such a morsel, knowing that to do so would offend the hungry spectre. Deceased beings are 775 generally feared, although instances are known in which they have shown kindness, particularly to their relatives. Like so [575] many supernatural beings, they figure most prominently as patrons of *kusiut* dancers (see vol. II, chap. 1). Further information concerning them is contained in the description of life after death.

776 Not even a complete list of beings would exhaust the 177 beliefs of the Bella Coola concerning the supernatural, since any unexpected visitation is attributed by them to this source. For example, when Mackenzie appeared, the first white man with whom the Bella Coola had come in contact, they thought that he must be from another world. Some thought him a dead man returned to life, and others considered him a supernatural visitor from above who had fallen down to earth, as did their first ancestors. The latter view prevailed, and it was ultimately decided that he must be *Qomcus*, a supernatural being resident aloft of whom little was known. This name was applied to him, and it has since been given to all white men.[18]

[18] Although it was in 1793 that Mackenzie passed down the Bella Coola valley, a number of stories of that event were still remembered in 1922. What most impressed the Bella Coola was his ability to make fire quickly. One man, now living, stated that he had heard from his mother that her father had spoken with him. Traditions of this type are valuable as reflecting the interests of a people, but their historical accuracy may well be doubted. One Kimsquit man, for example,

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concerning the danger of near approach to this creature:

Kwilais was a man of mixed lineage, Kimsquit and *Pa'a*, near Newitte. With several companions he was gathering berries when he stepped into a hole and felt numerous tiny creatures crawling over his legs. Looking down, he saw that they were small snakes, that had just been hatched from a Mother of Snakes. He fled, terrified, pursued by the reptiles, which he managed to keep off to some extent by brushing behind him a branch of spiny swamp gooseberry, a known deterrent. When he had out-distanced the snakes he called his companions, told them of his adventure, and returned home. There he repeated the tale. Though *Kwilais* did not know it, many of the snakes had succeeded in entering his stomach. Presently he began to swell; his body became larger and larger until he was in danger of bursting. The reptiles within were breeding rapidly. Luckily, one of his fellow villagers knew the proper remedy. A raised bed was made for the sufferer about five feet from the ground where *Kwilais* stretched himself on a number of thorny branches, while his friends built a fire of devil's club and swamp gooseberry twigs so that he was fumigated in the smoke. Then, to give greater potency, they cast on the flames soiled clothing and pounded cedar-bark pads stained with menstrual blood; even this was of no avail, so finally a woman squeezed out into a vessel some of her menstrual blood which *Kwilais* drank. This killed the snakes. The patient began to vomit, emitting a mass of wriggling serpents, and at once began to grow thinner, soon regaining his normal condition. Had he not been able to eject the reptiles, he would have died.

Kwilais was not the only one to have this unpleasant experience. Many others have suffered in the same way, but in no case has anyone been able to feel the snakes at the actual place or time of entry.

The beliefs of the Bella Coola concerning the power possessed by animals are clearly shown by their attitude with regard to killing them. Man is immortal, so are animals. *Alquntäm* decreed that beasts and birds should serve as food for mankind, but it is only their clothing, their worthless "blanket of flesh," as the Bella Coola express it, which they give to hunters. In the autumn leaves appear to die, but every spring they are reborn. Similarly, when an animal is slain, it merely discards its visible self while its spirit[a] ascends

[a] Footnote, see vol. I, p. 94.

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to the land above whence, in course of time, it comes down to earth again to reanimate a new body." Consequently, the success of a hunter does not indicate his mastery over an animal so much as the latter's good-will in allowing itself to be slain by one who has pleased him by ceremonial chastity (I, p. 110), or by one who has been endowed with skill by some other supernatural being. Men are accordingly careful to obey the wishes of their quarry. Long ago, a mountain goat told a shaman that he and his friends liked soot, so a hunter who has killed one always smears two bands of ashes across its face from the right eye to the left side of the mouth. Another shaman was told by a bear never to use owl-feathered arrows since none of his fellows killed with such would return. Plumes of other birds have since been used, preferably those of mallard ducks. Sometimes the wishes of an animal require considerable ritual. For example, when a bear is killed, the carcass is stretched upon neatly arranged evergreen boughs and skinned. The hunter reverses the pelt so that the tail lies near the neck, with the whole hanging loosely over the body. He pats it four times, as if pressing the skin back into place, and says:

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"Please don't linger. Go home and return," or,

"Please come to me tomorrow. Tell your brothers, your sisters, your uncles, your aunts and your other relations to come to me."

Should this be omitted, the animal is likely to stand up, skinless, shake itself, causing the pelt to return to its place, and run away. Yearling mountain goats are especially prone to do this, as already mentioned. Even if an animal does not show its resentment by escaping in this way, it often refuses to return to earth unless the proper rites have been performed over its carcass.

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Bears have another aversion: they do not like to be eaten by men. So the hunter leaves the skinned body for wolves

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"There are doubters in Bella Coola as in every other community, and several of the older men express disbelief in the immortality of animals.

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and eagles whom he invites to devour it. In so doing, he does not address them by their usual names, but calls Wolf, *Alkun-i-gurnum*, "The Devourer of Meat Which He Does Not Kill," that is, "The Biting Scavenger"; and Eagle, *Asaikaiyuti-maxnum*, "The Constant Eater," that is, "The One Who Eats before He Is Hungry." Next morning the flesh has been devoured and the hunter believes his guests have eaten it. Animals and birds, being supernatural, can hear the words of mortals and read their thoughts. The significance of these actions is that animals have the power to conceal themselves, so a hunter must gain their favour before he can hope to succeed. Belief in the efficacy of such customs as these is rapidly falling into decay and bear meat is now often eaten, but the skull is carefully placed in an evergreen tree near where the animal is slain, so that it may come back to life.

Fish, likewise, are immortal. In autumn the streams are choked with dead and dying salmon, but the Bella Coola know that they are not really dead, they have merely shed their worthless blankets in accordance with *Alquntăm*'s decrees. At that season of the year he causes the rivers to rise so that they will sweep away these useless and outworn cloaks.

Although the salmon, from the kindness of their hearts, allow human beings to feast on their blankets, yet they have certain likes and dislikes which are carefully observed. From the time the first spring salmon appear (I, pp. 759-762) until the rising of the July moon, women are not allowed to eat them or to go near the river. Men may eat the flesh, but instead of throwing the bones to dogs, they carefully return them to the river saying:

"Please come back tomorrow."

If this is inconvenient, bones can be thrown into the woods with impunity.

Salmon, like men and animals, live a human-like existence in their homes far beneath the surface of the ocean. They lack and desire earthly objects, especially pounded cedar-bark (see Appendix A) to use as sponges for their children, so the Bella Coola throw pieces of it and eagle down on the water.

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becomes critical. Only a shaman (I, p. 539) can return one, and if he fails death always results. In some cases a spirit leaves its owner without apparent reason; he becomes insane, tries to eat dirt, and his relatives realize at once what is the matter. They summon a shaman who takes off his cape, hangs it like a pouch on his stick, and points it in all directions as he sings his shaman's song. Finally he locates what is missing, and traps it in his cloak, which he places around the sick man. This restores the element and the sufferer recovers immediately. Another method is for the shaman to press the back of the patient's neck, and by blowing and spitting cause the wandering spirit to return. Either cure must be performed by a shaman because of the supernatural power required.

Spirits can be extracted in various ways. Shamans can draw one forth by sucking at the back of the neck between their cupped hands; in former times, some were so powerful that they could extract them by their mere presence. During *kusiut* dances (II, chap. 1), the uninitiated are told that if they enter the house where a ceremony is taking place, or even pass on the sidewalk outside the door, their spirits will be drawn from them by the power within and attracted to the dancer or to the sacred platform on which he is concealed. Many stories are told of this, which were firmly believed by the uninitiated until the last few years. Members of the society claim that their great power acts as a magnet to the spirits of all but their associates, except children in arms; the latter can be taken by their mothers into the house, because their supernatural elements have not developed sufficient strength to leave their bodies. A person may also lose his spirit through a sudden shock. If two people meet unexpectedly in the forest and one of them shouts loudly at the other, even if only in fun, the spasmodic contraction of the muscles is enough to expel it. The person to whom this happens falls down as if dead, and though he soon recovers, his spirit has left him, and if it is not brought back by a shaman he dies a lingering death.

At death, the spirit permanently leaves the body. In some

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cause it revive near the corpse for four days, or it may start at once on its travels. Distance means nothing to it, nor does time; once disembodied it goes back on the path of its late owner's ancestors from generation to generation, until it reaches the spot where his first forefather came to this earth. Here it assumes the bird or animal form used on that occasion and goes up to *Nuxnalt-a*. It is uncertain whether or not the spirit can take on, simultaneously, the different shapes used by various ancestors of the deceased. Its existence in the land above is similar to that on earth, but in an advanced degree. A good carpenter, for example, is a better carpenter after death; a chief is a greater chief; and one of the explanations for death is that *Alquntăm* has called a man to continue his work in another sphere. *Nuxnalt-a* is so huge that it is never crowded, though the spirits are immortal. They can see what is taking place on earth and sometimes return in bird or animal form to visit and comfort their grieving relatives. Powerful chiefs delight to display this, by means of a masked figure, as the central feature of a potlatch. Apart from this ceremonial usage, disembodied spirits play no part in the lives of the Bella Coola. They take no interest in human beings and accordingly are neither supplicated nor feared.

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THE LIFE

Closely associated with the spirit is the *nuxnalmuk kăl'*, life." As in the previous case, *Alquntăm* provides every human being and every animal with this at birth. It is an ethereal substance, having the form of the body which it animates; without it there can be neither strength nor growth; without life the body is an inert mass of flesh. As a person becomes older, so does this element grow, always taking the exact shape and form of the body. Alone, it can neither source nor think, its motive power being the spirit. It is the life that suffers

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[illegible] have been employed wherever possible to lessen the use of confusing native terms. *Life* is still an inaccurate translation of the Bella Coola word, but it is hoped that this matter will group the real significance from the description in this section.

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section of these with one another and with the spirit, the mental director of the life, is a matter of advanced Bella Coola theology on which opinions differ. Only men of philosophical temperament even hazard an opinion on such matters, which are beyond the realm of daily routine.

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When a man dies, his life leaves his body and the useless flesh begins to decay. At the same time the life is freed to travel as an intangible wraith, having the form and appearance of its dead owner. It visits all the places where he had been in the habit of going during life, irrespective of their distance from the scene of death. Sometimes it journeys to the locality where, in a dream, the mother of the deceased received her first intimation of pregnancy (I, p. 615). It wants to see former friends and sometimes makes its presence known to them by whistling. A person who hears this sound is saddened by the realization that one of his associates has passed away to some distant place. At other times, a man merely senses its presence and feels frightened without hearing or seeing anything to account for it. Very rarely, a dead person's life speaks to a dearly loved friend to inform him of his loss. During the existence of the body, spirit and life are closely associated, and the former sometimes accompanies the latter on its round of farewell visits before ascending to *Nusadi·a*.

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After four days the life descends to the land below where it lives forever as a ghost. Some believe that it is the shadow which assumes this form, but the seeming contradiction is relatively unimportant since the life is essentially shadow-like. Ghosts have already been described in connection with supernatural bodies, and further information will be found in vol. I, chap. VIII.

At death, when the life as a whole becomes a ghost, its constituent parts likewise undergo transformation. The one situated in the feet remains with the corpse and disintegrates, that located in the legs enters a wolf and nothing more is known of its fate; no one knows what happens to the one situated in the body. The part in the throat, including the voice, enters

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961 775 825 [539 127] an owl, possibly one of those which normally roost on the tree behind *Nuxmit-a*. This element of a dead person occasionally communicates with a living relative, as evidenced by the following story.

A number of years ago a party of men and women camped for the night beside one of the rivers flowing into South Bentinck Arm. After supper, as they were resting by their fire, an owl kept hooting from a neighboring tree. One of the men turned to a friend who had been making obscene remarks and, half in jest, warned him to be careful in case one of his relatives was listening. The foolish fellow looked at the owl and asked:

"Are you a relative of mine?"

There was no answer, but when he had repeated the question four times, the owl spoke:

"I am so-and-so," he said, naming the deceased grandfather of his questioner.

Consequent upon the belief that the voice of a dead person enters an owl, the bird is treated with considerable respect. It is improper to make fun of one, or to ask who it was when alive. Should a person do so, the owl answers with the interrogator's own name and he soon dies.

961 On the whole, the life does not affect the daily existence of the Bella Coola as profoundly as does the spirit. When they stop to ponder on the reason for some event, they readily admit the importance of the life with its constituent elements, but they are not always considering its activities and seeking to strengthen it. It is essentially a religious attribute, of greater moment to a man of imaginative and suggestible temperament than to one who carries on the daily routine without asking why and wherefore.

THE TALLY POST

773 777 In the beginning of time, when *Siyaminu* sent the first people down to earth, he erected in *Nuxmit-a* posts emblazoned with the bird or animal crest taken by each to serve as a memorial, or reminder, to him of the number of individuals existing

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that tally posts have mentality, and suggested that it might be those which attend the gathering of the supernatural beings at the winter solstice instead of an element from the human body itself.

One elderly Bella Coola, of philosophical temperament, described *qualtwaste* in terms far removed from the accounts of tally posts. According to him, every individual receives this supernatural possession at birth, and it remains with him, in close association with his body, throughout life. It stays in front of his face, invisible, yet having substance, and constantly shaking from side to side. If a man fails to receive a present at a potlatch, it is because his *qualtwaste* has ceased to move. When stationary it is not transparent, and not only hides its owner from the donor's sight, but acts as a barrier to his thoughts. The same man stated that this element can leave the body, can be seen by shamans, and that it is the one which ascends at the winter solstice to *Nuxwáit'a*. At death it is believed to accompany the spirit and the life to the land above.

There seems no reason to doubt that the concept of tally posts is an ancient belief. Nor does the application of the term *qualtwaste* to another immaterial possession of quite another type destroy this probability. It must be remembered that within the last eighty years the Bella Coola have suffered not only from the tremendous upheaval caused by the coming of the white man, but have been reduced to a mere fraction of their former numerical strength by various epidemics. These factors have led to the partial forgetting of ancient beliefs, with consequent confusion. It is probable that the use of the same term for the tally post, intimately connected with an individual's life although situated in the land above, and for an invisible and intangible possession which goes in front of him, is due to this recent decay of ancient convictions. If this be true, it merely means that in former times the Bella Coola had yet another supernatural element to govern and influence their lives.

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the point between Labouchere Channel and Bentinck Arm, there is danger from treacherous currents, so, when a shaman passes either of these places, he lays some food on the water and puffs eagle down into the air as he asks for help. If no shaman is in the canoe, this is done by the captain.

The being to whom offerings are most commonly made is *Tlitcäplilän-a*, the supernatural woman who cures the sick and gives power to shamans. Whenever a hunter kills an edible animal in the forest, he cuts off four pieces of flesh and throws them into his fire to gain her goodwill. Long, long ago, *Tlitcäplilän-a* appeared to a hunter, seized some of his quarry, and told him of her wishes with regard to presents; these have since been obeyed by wise people. Similarly, the relatives of a man absent in the mountains or at sea throw scraps of food on the fire and ask the protection of *Tlitcäplilän-a* for the one in danger. In this case, it is clear that objects thrown into flames are received and appreciated by *Tlitcäplilän-a*.

Mouskuts, although usually propitiated by prayer, is also given presents. Frequently, when a man is praying, he accompanies his words by blowing up into the air small particles of eagle down. Prayer in connection with the departure of war or hunting expeditions have already been mentioned, but before starting on any journey by canoe, the captain is careful to pray and to throw upon the water four pieces of red, and four of yellow cedar-bark. The blowing upwards of eagle down is a common accompaniment to all kinds of prayers, but, if none is available, cedar-bark can be used equally satisfactorily. If possible, this is cast on the surface of water, otherwise into a fire, as a request is being made. The Bella Coola do not believe that such presents are actually used and considered valuable by *Alquntäm*, but they emphasize and accompany the vocal prayer, and demonstrate the petitioner's sincerity.

Ghosts, on the other hand, depend almost entirely on presents given them by mortals, since food is not abundant in the land below. The relatives of a dead person always throw

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775 small particles of food on a fire; these become large when they
782 reach the land below and nourish the ghosts. An individual making an offering of this kind says:

"*Awkăldimat kuzăs*," "This is to make straight your road, beloved one."

[756] The needs and desires of ghosts have been made known to mortals through visits paid by shamans to the land below, and by the coming of ghosts to this world. It is, therefore, realized that food placed on the ground does not reach the [372] land below, but that morsels thrown on a fire sink through into the abode of ghosts. Offerings to the dead are not made [753] with the hope of receiving favours from them, but rather to provide beloved relatives with necessary food and to prevent them from showing displeasure by causing stomach-aches and other ailments.

782 Other instances, both of prayer and of sacrifice, will be recorded in connection with various myths. The salient feature is that the Bella Coola are able to gain, by such means, the favour of supernatural beings, a factor which plays an important part in their daily life. In addition, they have a [919] large number of practices based on sympathetic magic. No absolutely rigid boundary line can be drawn between the latter and religion proper, but there is a fairly clear division between rites such as those just described, in which propitiation is the important element, and others in which the desired end follows the mere performance of a certain act. Customs of this last type will be reserved for later consideration (vol. I, chap. xi).

THE OBSERVANCE OF CEREMONIAL CHASTITY

921, 785 In addition to prayer and sacrifice, the Bella Coola have yet another means of obtaining the goodwill of supernatural beings, and at the same time of strengthening their own supernatural attributes so that good fortune is likely to occur. This is by the practice of *xwtsta*, ceremonial chastity, of which the basis is that a man must not hold intercourse except after certain periods of continence. To understand this, it is neces-

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TERM	DIRECT ADDRESS	INDIRECT ADDRESS
Mother's sister's husband	Same as father's sister's husband.	
Brother's son's wife... or Sister's son's wife.....	Same as son's wife. " "	Same as son's wife, or *ni yaas di smix*, "Wife of my *smix*."
Brother's daughter's husband..... or Sister's daughter's husband.....	Same as daughter's husband. " " "	Same as daughter's husband, or *di hulamix di smix*, "Husband of my *smix*."

[597] In case of adoption, the same kinship terms are used as if the adopted person were a member of the family by birth. 601 A more complicated situation arises when a child who is 553 regarded as the reincarnation (I, p. 616) of a recently deceased 775 elderly relative, is given the latter's name. In such a case the child is addressed by the kinship terms applicable to his namesake. In recent years, at any rate, this application is without social significance, and, as far as could be learned, this has always been the case. Bella Coola sentiment is that it is fitting for a child to receive the name of one of its ancestors. When a parent sees the child, and thinks of his name, he thinks of the late deceased, hence it is natural to use kinship terms accordingly. This is more obvious when the child is regarded as a reincarnation, though even in such a case he does not receive any of the marks of respect paid to his namesake; the reincarnation is physical, not social. In course of time this is forgotten and the child takes his place among others of his own generation, though it may be remembered in rhetorical speeches on ceremonial occasions.

606 The kinship terminology of the Bella Coola combines features of the family and classificatory systems. The reciprocal terms for parents- and children-in-law, brothers- and sisters-in-law, lack of sex differentiation for brothers and sisters, and the importance of age in the designations applied to persons of the same generation, are all features of the classificatory system. On the other hand, bilateralism, failure to

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* 556 622 the time the earth was settled, ought to be chief of that village. If he has been able to give the necessary potlatches to weight his possession of that name, the fact that he is the legal descendant of the first chief will add a certain amount to his prestige, but unless he has been able to do this his influence will be slight.

* 556 622 766 [795] Thirdly, potlatches smooth the way for the giver after death. Before the corpse of a chief is removed from the house where he has died, a speaker always announces the number of potlatches he has given and the total value of goods distributed at them. These gifts in a vague way are felt to make easy the deceased's path in the next world as they have done in the present. The feature of the potlatch, though firmly believed by some of the older people, plays a less important part in the life of the Bella Coola than might be expected.

* 556 [824] What are the requisites for giving a potlatch?

(1) Possession of an ancient myth, containing a name or names. Probably every Bella Coola has this requirement. A man's family may not be the proud owners of one of the ancestral myths dealing with the first settlement of this earth, but they will at least own some ancient myth which they can elevate by giving a potlatch. As has been said, the owner of one of the most ancient names in many cases chooses to elevate one of lesser antiquity, a course which must, perforce, be done by one who lacks an origin myth. The slight feeling of deference with which those are regarded who hold the names of the first inhabitants of the earth, the mighty chiefs of old, is subordinate to the very real feeling of respect in which is held the successful giver of potlatches. The descendant of one of the first people has the potential right to chieftainship, but unless he can give potlatches he will fail to gain that eminence.

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* 556 769 (2) An occasion for giving a potlatch is never lacking. It consists of a number of closely associated rites, any one of which will serve as a reason for the ceremony. The most important feature, the return of a dead ancestor or ancestors to visit the living, is available to anyone at any time. The Bella

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CAUSES OF DEATH

961 The Bella Coola know that sickness, accident, wilful murder, old age, and a host of other factors may at any time terminate a man's life, but they consider that any one of these direct causes is possible only in conjunction with an indirect reason of a religious or supernatural nature; in the last analysis they attribute death to supernatural, not to natural causes. [773] As described in a previous chapter, an ancient myth attributes the origin of death to the stupidity of Raven, but this belief, even if its historical accuracy is accepted, belongs to the realm of philosophy and ancient history rather than to everyday life. 961 When a canoe is capsized on the ocean and its occupants are drowned,—the Bella Coola do not consider a drowning a mere 776 accident—it is because Xmoqwa was hungry and desired human flesh. This indirect reason is quite as important as the direct one. So, too, the death of a man beneath a falling tree or a land-slide is no accident; *Sā'ōma* caused the tree to crush to earth or the slide to roll downwards. Most individuals believe that this supernatural being is responsible when an animal kills a hunter. He delights in death and always sits on [756] a coffin before it is taken to the grave, although none but shamans ever see him. Any supernatural being can cause death, but it must not be imagined that the Bella Coola go through life in a state of constant fear; death may vanquish them in 953 the forests, but the probabilities are against it. Nor does sickness appear to them as a natural phenomenon. Its cause is either the intrusion of some foreign object into the body, or the weakness of one of the patient's supernatural elements. The only remedy in the latter case is an appeal to the supernatural, sometimes through the medium of a shaman, whereas [755] a foreign object in the body can often be extracted by a skilled [754] practitioner. A disease of this type is often brought on by the machinations of a sorcerer, and if death results it is attributed 761 to the potency of his charms, not to a natural ailment. Even [775] ghosts are able to cause death. In war, one man may be able [726]

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764 while the relatives are preparing he body for disposal. For a child, these services are performed by the parents; for a married man whose parents are dead, by his brothers and other kindred; for a married woman, by her husband or the members of her own family. If she has borne no children, it is customary for her relatives to carry out the funeral rites, especially if she has been many times rebought from her husband. If such repayment has not been made, it is considered correct for a husband to bury his wife, although it is a point of honour for her relatives to reimburse him later for his expenditure. On the other hand, when children have been born and financial assistance mutually given and received several times, it is proper for the husband to perform the funeral rites, although he may receive assistance from his wife's kinsmen. There is no rigid ruling on the point, but bickerings seldom occur in connection with disposal of the dead. Members of the ancestral family are ready to assist in every case, both on account [614] [559] of the disgrace that would follow a niggardly funeral, and also as a means of displaying their wealth.

The first essential is to wash the body, a rite performed by men for a man, by women for a woman. It is immaterial who does this though some of the relatives usually volunteer. [139] Neither husband nor wife touches a dead consort, though it is said that long ago a man would hold intercourse with a deceased wife to indicate his excessive grief. The most influential member of the immediate family takes the lead in the various necessary acts, although there is always endless discussion and advice from members of the ancestral family and others interested. A nose-ring is placed in the septum [301] [175] of the corpse; if this is omitted, the body will not be able to dissolve into its elements but will range the earth as a walking phantom, causing injury to anyone who observes it. [525] If the deceased has just eaten some of the first run of spring salmon or olachen, a shaman washes out his mouth with a sponge of soaked cedar-bark which he throws into the river. The essence of the salmon is thus extracted from the body; if

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this rite is neglected no more salmon will come to the river. No precautions are necessary after the food has been digested. [764] [825]

Many men prepare their coffins before death. If this has not been done, a large, wooden box is provided by a kinsman of the deceased. The body is dressed in good clothing and bound into a squatting position, head between knees, hands clasped around shins, and the haunches just above the level of the soles of the feet. In this posture it is thrust into the coffin. Particularly if the corpse has been brought from some distance and *rigor mortis* has set in, it may be necessary to break the back-bone and even to crush the skull before the box can be closed. A stone is placed on the back of the neck, within the coffin, to prevent the ghost from returning to haunt the survivors. A little choice food is placed beside the body of a dearly loved child for nourishment during the journey to the next world. [763] [602] [775]

From this point onwards, the funeral rites differ according to the rank of the deceased. On the death of an influential *nusuk*, the senior members of that society meet as soon as possible to arrange the dramatization of the coming of *Mulakila*. A *nusuk* son, brother, or other near relative is always present even if he has little importance in the affairs of the society. If the death has taken place during the night, the conference is held the following morning and the rites begin at noon. There may be delay until all have gathered, but about the middle of the first possible day two *nusuk* are sent up one of the mountains behind the village. They carry large, cone-shaped whistles which they blow twice. The sound is plainly audible in the village and all, whether or not members of the *nusuk* society, recognize that a supernatural being is drawing near. After a short interval, another whistle is blown by a *nusuk* concealed on the roof of the house in which the corpse is lying, and after another pause the same sound comes from within, beside the body itself. Most of the uninitiated know that this is the voice of *Mulakila* (also called *Sixsiqutsam*), [575] [766] [776]

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764 grave carrying a spruce bough in his hand. He touches with it the edge where he is standing, then, in sunwise order, the east, south, and west margins. This circuit is repeated four times and the branch tossed away to westward. This essential [774] ceremony is based on a belief that the lives, or perhaps the spirits, of the grave-diggers have been drawn from them into the grave and are in danger of being pressed down by the coffin. Should this occur, they would have short lives. The spruce branch enables the supernatural elements to leave the cavity and return to their owners who suffer no ill effects. Anyone, other than a grave-digger, can perform this rite.

The coffin is now lifted into the grave, care being taken that the corpse faces east. As already described, it is in a squatting position with haunches almost on the ground. Boards have been prepared in advance, and with these the grave-diggers make a roof-like covering, placing at each corner [775] a stone weighing from ten to fifteen pounds, to prevent the ghost from returning to trouble the survivors. Earth is thrown in on top of the boards, and as it falls the wailing breaks out dolorously in a final crescendo of mourning. [766] If a chief has been buried, his fellows sometimes sing a *se'ele* [533] song. At this time it is proper for one or more chiefs to rise and speak. No one is required to do so, nor is there any rule [537] as to the order in which they make their remarks. The first [764] speaker is usually a prominent man related to the survivors, though seldom a son, brother, or other near relative of the deceased. A speech is generally addressed in part to the spirit of the dead person, telling it where to go; in part, to the mourners. For a dead child, emphasis is laid on the fact that although he did not live long enough to be incorporated into his ancestral myths on earth, this will be done for him in his future home. In conclusion, an appeal is often made to [795] *Alqunisim*, under the name of *Smaiahtis*, to take pains that [793] the spirit of the dead is given its rightful place in *Nuxmit-a*, in the section where its first forbears were created, and whither the spirits of its dead ancestors have returned since the beginning of time.

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put his granddaughter into the ground beside her grandmother but it may all be for the best."[1]

There is no doubt that condolences of this nature assist the mourning relatives to bear up under their grief. This fact was emphasised by several Bella Coola, and in addition the writer was able to observe it on several occasions. They readily respond to suggestions of any kind and undoubtedly derive comfort from the laudatory comments of influential chiefs.

Speeches of this general nature are always delivered as the grave is being filled in. Sometimes this work is finished before all who wish to do so have expressed themselves, sometimes the remarks are so short that they are ended before all the earth has been thrown back. When the hole has been filled to ground level, it is stamped down and the surplus earth scattered out of sight among the bushes, no mound being thrown up.

Great care is always taken to prevent the return of the ghost. In addition to the weighting with stones already described, other methods are used before the funeral party leaves the cemetery. Heavy boards are usually laid flat over the grave and rocks piled on these bar the way up from below. A further precaution is the setting upright of four stakes, one at each corner of the hole, and fastening ropes of cedar-bark between them along the east and west sides of the grave. The significance of this is not fully understood, except that the ghost cannot pass the strands. Four spruce saplings are cut and placed either between the grave and the village, or one on each side of the hole; their sharp needles form an effective barrier.

While these precautions are being taken, any clothing and utensils brought to the grave and not already consumed are thrown on the fire and allowed to blaze brightly. The ashes

[1] It was impossible to record these speeches verbatim at the time of their delivery. The writer was able to make notes, which were amplified by each speaker later telling him what he had said. Although lacking literal accuracy, the above may be considered essentially correct.

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thrown on it. One rather philosophic old man suggested that in this way the soul could easily return to *Nusmät-a*. It is possible that this means of disposal was carried out in former times, but no informant had actually seen it practised. The Bella Coola state that cremation is carried out by the Kitlobe* and the Carriers. On the morning after a burning, young men of the former tribe rush to the spot and smear their faces with the semi-charred bones, amid much shouting. The Carriers are said to stand with their bodies inclined over the burning corpse and to smear on their faces any grease exuded from it. The accuracy of these statements is very doubtful, and can have no bearing on the reputed practice of cremation among the Bella Coola.

The bodies of rich or poor, chiefs, commoners, or slaves, all are buried in a similar manner though with differences in the complexity of ritual. Nor is any different method practised for criminals, murdered people, or those committing suicide. It is believed that in case of self-destruction the body cannot separate into its elements and reach *Nusmät-a*; that part which becomes the ghost is able to go to the land below, but neither spirit nor life can ascend. According to one man, who may, however, have been affected by Christian influence, this is because *Alquntäm* decrees the length of life and any wilful shortening is insulting to him. Suicide is rare among the Bella Coola and four cases only were heard of. One woman killed herself in shame at having accidentally set fire to a village, another because her husband was unduly jealous, and two men through bladder stricture.

On the whole, Bella Coola methods for disposal of the dead have altered but little since the coming of the white man. The change from sub-aerial exposure to interment was probably not due to foreign influence although the introduction of metal shovels has facilitated the digging of graves and probably hastened the movement. A change in posture has, however, taken place. In former times, a corpse was always buried

*Still are at present, or have within the memory of elderly people.

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177 964 squatting, now it is customary to use the extended position. It is impossible to state whether this is the direct result of white teaching, or whether the ease with which large boxes can now be made has led to interment at full length.

RITES FOLLOWING DISPOSAL OF THE BODY

968 Interment of the corpse does not end the ceremonial necessitated by a death in the community. As already described, some of the clothing and utensils of the dead person are burned during the funeral, but all are not destroyed at that time. The proportion kept for future treatment is immaterial, nor is there any established usage concerning the type of object reserved. During the days following the funeral, relatives of the deceased carefully gather his clothing, cooking utensils, rifles, and all other articles which have been his personal property or used exclusively by him. On the fourth day, these are taken to the cemetery by his immediate family, accompanied by as many of their friends as wish to show their sympathy. A fire is kindled near the grave and on it is deposited whatever can be burnt; other objects are either cast into the flames or piled near at hand (see Plate 17). It is most important that every article belonging to the deceased should be disposed of in this way. There are two reasons for this. First, it is considered indecent to use the possessions of a dead person; they would have the effect of poison on anyone doing so. Secondly, the ghost of the deceased receives goods that are burnt or deposited on the grave four days after the funeral. If deprived of what belongs to him, a ghost punishes the offenders by causing sickness. Occasionally a new rifle, or some other treasured possession, is kept by a relative or friend; this is contrary to the established customs, but is justified by considering the article to be a gift from the deceased or a memento of him. No one would accept such a legacy unless he felt sure that the dead man

[995] [753] 178 968

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entertained such kindly sentiments towards him that he would be glad to have his friend receive it.

In recent years the number of incombustible objects has increased enormously with the introduction of metal utensils, gramophones, and other things obtained from white traders. Although these are considered to be of use to the ghost, and must be carefully placed near the grave, they can be publicly exchanged for others by a relative. The sentiments expressed on such occasions are that the ghost, though aware of what is taking place, does not resent an open transfer; and that it is unnecessary to deposit the equivalent of what has been removed. There is undoubtedly a vague idea that the ghost uses, not the actual object, but its essence, which is received by the deposition. It must be emphasized that this feeling has not become crystallized to such a state that it is customary to replace goods laid on the grave with others. Such an exchange is a rare event and would cause animosity if carried out by anyone except a near relative.

Sometimes a dying person requests that a house be erected over his grave, a common Bella Bella custom. This is built immediately after the funeral and articles that cannot be burnt are placed within it instead of being piled on the ground. The sorrowing relatives may choose to erect a picket fence around the spot, but no other mark for the grave is put up until a memorial potlatch several years after death. House or fence soon falls into decay and rarely an effort is made to repair either. Nor is the grave itself disturbed. Cow-parsnips, which are much used for food, grow frequently in cemeteries, but no one would gather the shoots that rise above a grave; they are food belonging to the dead person. The white man has taught the Bella Coola how to plant apple-trees and these are often set out in graveyards, though the fruit is allowed to fall to the ground for the benefit of those interred beneath. The Bella Bella are said formerly to have replaced at intervals the coffin containing a dead person, but this seems never to have been a Bella Coola practice. Indeed, a grave is never

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"She was my daughter, I have a right to do as I like." 968

Samuel King and the others accepted the exchange as a matter of course and made no comments. Captain Schooner took no part in the burning of his daughter's goods, this being the task of those with whom she had been living, and who accordingly knew which were hers. The fire was kindled by a married daughter of Reuben Schooner, though it could have been done equally well by any woman. On the following morning, July 1, Samuel King went with a friend to the forest 963 964 and passed four times through a small spruce sapling bent into an arch. This was the last incident in the funeral rites.

Fate of the Dead

Life of the Dead

Little need be added to the account given in vol. I, chap. 975 ● 11 of the fate of those parts of a man which go at death to *Nuxmăl·a*. The spirit and the life travel back the path of the deceased's ancestors from generation to generation until they reach the place where his first forefather came to earth and where his cloak, if he had worn one, floated back after his alteration to human form. When the spirit and the life of a descendant reach the spot, they change into a being having the form of the cloak, and so return to *Nuxmăl·a*. The spirit and the life of one who is a member of several ancestral families visit the localities where the transformations to human shape of all his ancestors occurred. The Bella Coola believe that these two elements can assume many crest forms, but they do not know whether this entails the simultaneous assumption of many shapes to comprise a composite figure; or whether the spirit and the life, which become a single entity in the case of a member of one ancestral family, become multiple for one who is a member of several. When lamenting a dead person, mention is always made of the various scenes which he will have visited, and the forms he will have assumed. At a memorial potlatch, the deceased may return as a hybrid, or as

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one of the several crests which it is believed he has become. The point does not appear important to the Bella Coola, corresponding to their indefinite ideas concerning whether the spirit and the life have become a single being, or several.

Knowledge of the life led in *Nusmăt-a* by the deceased, now in the form of his crest,[49] is most indefinite. In a general way it is felt that the actions of this being are similar to those carried on during life, but in a more advanced degree. A skilled carpenter is a better carpenter in the land above, a chief who has given many potlatches below can give more in *Nusmăt-a*. This belief finds expression in mourning songs which frequently state how *Alquntăm* has called a good carpenter to work above, or how a chief has gone to exhibit his generosity in a new sphere. It is doubtful whether this sentiment plays any real part in Bella Coola thought. The spirit and the life of a dead person have gone too far away to affect the living; what little is known of their actions has been handed down from the distant past and is merely a matter of history. The only time that these two merged elements come to this world is at a memorial potlatch, and formerly the uninitiated undoubtedly believed that they were witnessing such a visit. Though the spectators were shown as a matter of course that the spirit and the life had become bird or animal, emphasis was laid on the fact that they had become the *particular* bird or animal crest of the donor's ancestral family. The effect of the memorial potlatch in former times, as at present, was, therefore, social rather than religious. Besides, the two parts portrayed have never been known to affect a human being; they expect no offerings, grant no assistance, cause no injury, and are accordingly neglected.

In comparison with the above vague beliefs, Bella Coola information concerning ghosts is clear and exact. As already

[49] It is accepted that men were created as human beings, and only assumed bird or animal shapes in order to reach the earth, but there is no corresponding belief that the spirit and the life change back from crest to human form on arrival above. Of course the performance of human activities by mammalian creatures presents no difficulties to Bella Coola thought.

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described, at death the shadow, the body, and a portion of the life, descend to the land below where existence is continued as a ghost. These wraiths are usually termed, *Kaibu'lang*, "The Earthy Ones," though they prefer the name *Aiuaiáwm*, "They Who Have Become Supernatural." They enter into the lives and actions of the Bella Coola in a way entirely different from that of the elements which go aloft at death. 775

The land of ghosts, immediately beneath the earth, is similar to it. There are trees and bushes, stones, grass, everything as on the surface of the world. There is a river, too, but it rises in the west and flows eastward, contrary to the course of the Bella Coola. The sun that shines below is green and unnatural, giving an ethereal light like that of the moon which, indeed, it is sometimes said to be. The seasons are the reverse of those on earth; when mortals are in midsummer, it is wintertime for ghosts. The fluff which human beings see falling from cottonwood trees reaches the land of ghosts as snow. All earthly springs rise from the river in the land below; they never freeze in winter because they come from a warm region, and the coldness of spring water in summer is the result of coming from a land where it is winter. With the exception of the peculiar light, the only essential difference between the land of ghosts and this world is that food is very scarce in the former; berries grow below, and it is supposed that there must be fish and animals there, but it is common knowledge that residents there are always hungry. 772 775 [525]

The life led by ghosts is similar to that of human beings. They occupy the same type of house as before death, dwell in the same kind of villages on the river bank, wear similar clothes, have similar likes and dislikes, require similar food, and even enjoy the same kind of dances. One old Bella Coola even stated that the ghosts are able to summon supernatural beings from *Nuxmálua* to their *kusiut* rites. It is generally believed that no work is done below, although several of the older people denied this. According to these individuals, a ghost can perform more rapidly and easily whatever tasks he had been 775

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accustomed to do when alive; but the workmanship is shadowy and unsubstantial, sometimes even transparent. Ghosts do not act like human beings, but usually walk backwards, sometimes even on their heads, and spend much of their time playing a game resembling football with large, globular objects made of some light substance. They communicate with one another both by whistling and in a language which resembles the attempts at speech made by a tongueless person. Some individuals believe that there is a supreme chief in the land of ghosts, *Alläl-laisil*, sent down like Pluto to preside over the shades. He figures in certain stories describing descents to the lower world; but many Bella Coola know nothing of his existence below, although it furnishes a plausible explanation for his coming by night to molest human beings. Like *Sxaiawax* he causes blood to rush forth from the mouth and genitalia of anyone whom he seizes; death follows, and a new victim has been acquired for his kingdom. The more common belief is that the villages of ghosts have chiefs like those of human beings. It is thought, indefinitely, that after a long period of time the ghosts die, and some of them may then return to this world as infants. A child born with dimples in its ears, which are regarded as indications of previous borings for rings, is welcomed as the reincarnation of some unknown ancestor.

At death, the ghost does not immediately appear in the land below, but remains for four days within the back-room of a house corresponding in style to an ordinary Bella Coola dwelling. It is believed that one of these large houses is beneath every village* and that the dead pass straight down through the earth into it. Meanwhile the goods, burnt at the grave during the funeral, as well as those deposited beside it, have fallen through the ground and notified the ghosts that a newcomer has arrived. The wraiths assemble from all directions and fight over the articles, none of which are obtained by the one who owned them during life. On the fourth

*There may be one huge house, extending beneath the world like *Nuxnit-a* above; it was impossible to obtain definite information on this point.

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day after the funeral, the relatives of the dead person burn the remainder of his property, which passes through the earth to the ghost for whom it is intended. Ghost-singers have taken their places and begin to beat out music, and presently the recently deceased appears, stepping backwards from the back-room in time to the beating of sticks. He is at once surrounded by his fellows, each anxious to learn the latest news of relatives still alive. This dance is really to welcome the new arrival, and takes place irrespective of his rank. After it has been held, it is hopeless to attempt to rescue a dead person, although that has been done several times during the four days immediately succeeding death.

Only shamans are able to peer down into the land of the dead, though stories are told of inadvertent visits to it in relatively recent times. Human beings are prevented from visiting their dead relatives, but the latter, being supernatural, can come to the earth at will. They are always dreaded, and anyone who hears their whistling or their tongueless chatter cowers in his house, and hopes they will pass by. Shamans can understand their speech and to them the dead explain their mission. If the relations of a dead person have failed to burn all his personal possessions, he returns to earth to inform them, through a shaman, of the omission. The house is scoured for anything left and it is burnt at once near the grave, though no one knows how a ghost would punish failure to give him his property. Thoughtful people, remembering the scarcity of food in the land below, frequently give presents to their dead relatives by casting small morsels of food on the side of the central fire nearest the front door, beneath which is a passage to the lower regions. The food becomes magnified as it falls down this, so that even small fragments are sufficient to feed many hungry ghosts. Since the introduction of metal stoves, it has become customary to throw food into a fire kindled for the purpose in the cemetery; the most suitable time is at dusk, although people are always afraid that spectres may be prowling around at that hour. If sufficient presents are not given

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to a ghost, he informs a shaman of the fact and the latter notifies the relatives of the deceased. If no shaman is convenient, the shade does not hesitate to help himself. Invisible, and armed with a barbed hook, he approaches a person who is eating and pulls away a crumb which falls to the earth. Should the eater stoop to pick this up, the ghost, robbed of his luxury, beats the offender with his hook, causing toothache or sometimes a sharp pain in the head or stomach. Other ailments are caused by the ghosts hitting with invisible stones those who have offended them. Consequently, no one picks up a crumb which has fallen, since it is impossible to know whether it has been an accident or a seizure. Another indication of a ghost's hunger is loss of a tooth. The loser should throw it on a fire with an invitation to the dead to accept his offering.

The barrier between ghosts and human beings is considered to be little more than a wall of smoke, just too dense for ordinary eyes to penetrate. In early times intercommunication between the denizens of the two worlds was so easy that a doting mother was once allowed to send her dead child on earth. Unfortunately, the woman's mother one day insisted on holding her grandchild, unaware that he was a ghost. Shocked at his appearance, the old woman dropped the child, much to the anger of the dead people.[1] Ever since that time it has been impossible for human beings to see and talk with their deceased kinsmen. Like so many Bella Coola stories, it is doubtful whether this one is regarded as more than an item of ancient history; it is considered to be a fact, but it is not one that enters into the daily thoughts of the people.

Ghosts frequently come to their old homes at night where dogs can see them. If one of these animals begins to bark and gazes fixedly at a spot where nothing is to be seen, it is because a wraith is standing there and the dog's owner hopes that it will remain invisible. It is true that some individuals have received shamanistic power from a ghost, but more often a visitation is disastrous and to be avoided. A dead person often

[1] This story is recorded in detail later (I, p. 378).

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tries to speak to living relatives, but his whistling language is unintelligible and frightens the hearer. Ghosts dislike urine, and the only means known to keep them away from a house is to sprinkle this liquid outside the door, a common Bella Coola custom. There is no actual danger in hearing a ghost, and little even in seeing one, provided the observer does not relaxin his equanimity, but should he try to do so, something happens to his mouth as if an invisible hand had been clamped over it to prevent his words issuing forth. He can neither eat nor drink and soon dies.* It is possible that other beings are responsible for this same affliction, but as no sufferer has ever been able to explain the cause of his ailment, no one knows. The most dangerous ghost is that of a person who, buried without a coffin, is unable to disintegrate into his elements. The sight of such an apparition causes almost immediate death through contraction and closing of the mouth.

An unpleasant habit of ghosts is the throwing of stones at the living. This is done partly from a love of mischief, and partly to remind their relatives of their needs. An old Kimsquit man described how, when encamped on King Island, he had almost been struck by a stone which seemed to fall from a tree. He realized that it must have been thrown by a ghost, and his opinion was confirmed when he found he could not speak. He instantly built a fire and cast on it both food and clothing as offerings to the dead, which had the effect of loosening his mouth. Pondering on the reason, he remembered that one of his relatives had died not far away, and that he had failed to give him any crumbs for a long time. In this case, as in many others, the stone was visible, though the thrower remained invisible.

Even near approach to ghosts is sometimes dangerous. The same man related how, when hunting, he heard what he thought was the note of a water ouzel, and paused by hoodlessly. In a few minutes he thought he heard the cackling of geese, but the sound, instead of continuing to come from a pond a few hun-

*The disease attributed to the actions of ghosts may be indigen-

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dead yards away, rapidly drew near the hunter along the trail. He raised his musket and stepped aside, but though the sound went past him down the path, he could see nothing. Terrified, he realized that he had been near two ghosts, and rushed back to the village. A shaman was called who informed him that he had met his dead father's sister and another relative, both of whom were hungry. The hunter, too weak from fright to help himself, watched the shaman light a fire and throw on it a considerable amount of food and goods. Finally, he ripped the hunter's shirt from his back and threw it into the flames. Consequently, no harm resulted from this experience.

Ghosts, like all other supernatural beings, can, of course, control their powers so that their appearance does not injure a beholder. A few years before 1922 a certain *Qwalito'i*, whose ancestral name was *Le'qme'i*, was encamped at *Snaihaimats* on the Labouchere Channel side of King Island. At dusk a woman came to his fire and proceeded to warm her cape. He recognized from her green face that she must be a ghost and boldly asked her what she wanted.

"I have been searching for mussels," she replied, "but without success."

In an instant she vanished and *Qwalito'i* experienced neither good nor evil from this apparition. The Bella Coola say that this being may not have been a ghost as he had thought, but was perhaps one of the under-sea dwellers who have somewhat the same appearance.

Since ghosts, like other supernatural beings, are believed to possess both wisdom and power, it might be thought that they would be invoked frequently. However, death has altered their character to such an extent that they are avoided and kept at a distance. The only time that an appeal is made to a ghost is when a young person dies without apparent reason and the survivors wish to learn the cause. The body is buried with a long cord consisting of alternate strands of dyed and undyed cedar-bark projecting from its mouth and stretching to the surface. The relative desiring information summons to his house several shamans whose powers have been obtained

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from ghosts, and for four days feeds them lavishly. On the 5th morning they proceed to the grave, accompanied by kinsmen of the deceased, and pound on the ground with sticks, asking the dead person whether or not he had been murdered, and if so, the name of the murderer. It is said that in former times the voice of the deceased could always be plainly heard giving the desired information. This ceremony has not been carried out for many years, and exact details are not known by any of the living Bulia Creole. It seems clear that some [illegible] must have been employed, requiring active deception on the part of the shamans. 4.

It was difficult to ascertain to what extent shamans believed in their own powers to understand the speech of ghosts. There is no doubt that the Bulia Creole are easily influenced by suggestion, and if an individual is told that he has received help from a ghost, it is not difficult for him to believe that such has been the case. Further, his fellows are convinced of his powers, a circumstance which does not fail to affect him. It may be stated definitely that in many cases shamans have some confidence in their own powers, although they do not hesitate to use deception to increase their prestige. This point will be considered in greater detail in the following chapter.

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE WITH REGARD TO GHOSTS

Much of the information concerning ghosts is contained in stories which have been handed down for generations and which are regarded as historical records. Some of these must be deferred to the chapters on folk-lore and shamanism, but the following are sufficient to explain the source of many Bulia Creole beliefs on this subject.*

A Story from Ghosts

Long, long ago, there lived a little girl who used to cry incessantly. One evening when she was disturbing the whole household by crying, her father said angrily to her:

*Some stories have been included in this paper to provide illustrations of the type of legend upon which superstitious beliefs depend.

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"Keep quiet or the ghosts will come and carry you off."

Even this threat did not silence her; later on, all her companions went to bed, leaving her alone, crying, in the central part of the house. After a time her father entered the child's sobs had grown fainter, though she seemed to be moaning in the same manner as before. He went out to investigate, found her place vacant, and, listening intently, realized that the sound came from below; the ghosts had come for her. He roused the household and called in all the men of the village to dig for the girl with sharpened spruce branches. Her crying was still audible and the diggers were directed by it; sometimes they seemed to be on the point of overtaking her, but always her ghost-captor eluded his pursuers by moving sideways through the ground instead of continuing his direct descent. At length the men gave up their task in despair, leaving the mourning father and mother to lament the former's rash remark which had brought the ghosts.

The parents of the girl consulted all the village shamans, one of whom formulated a scheme to rescue the victim. He told her relatives to construct shamanic lowers from the roof of the house, and to place on each remaining one a vessel filled with urine. He stationed a helper beside each vessel, ready to upset it when he gave the signal, and requested everyone else to leave the house. When these arrangements had been carried out, the shaman went alone to the cemetery, passed through the earth to the land of ghosts, and invited the wraiths to assemble in the house for a feast. They gladly accepted, and the hidden assistants watched them enter, one or two at a time, as if they had been human beings bidden to a ceremony. At last all had arrived except the principal chief, who was to sit in the central seat behind the fire. The feast could not proceed without him, so the ghosts sent a special messenger down below to summon him. It was this chief who had stolen the child, and the excitement of the watchers became intense as he entered, carrying concealed beneath his cloak the girl whose cries betrayed her presence to the hidden relatives. When all had taken their places, the shaman gave the previously arranged signal and his accomplices tipped the urine over the lounge holes. Wild confusion followed. The ghosts dashed to and fro, showing their anger and resentment by furious whistling and inarticulate gurgling. At last they rushed from the house, abandoning the child. They could still be heard in the vicinity of the village, as the shaman directed the people to scatter urine all around the house, which drove away the unwelcome visitors. The use of this deterrent was first known on this occasion.

The parents of the stolen child were overjoyed at her return, but it was soon apparent that their daughter had changed. She would not eat;

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in fact, she acted as if she could not see food placed before her. The next morning she rose early and was seen to eat the ashes of fish that had been burnt as torches; this proved conclusively that she was really dead. Thenceforth, instead of being given food in the usual way, her meals were thrown into the fire, from the ashes of which she received her nourishment. Ever since that time, the Bella Coola have recognized that food for the dead must be thrown on a fire.

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An Attempt to Rescue a Dead Wife

Two or three hundred years after the first settlement of the earth, a brave Kimsquit man, *Ne·chaklaxmq*, set out with his three sons to hunt seals. His wife was in an advanced state of pregnancy at the time, but her delivery was not expected for several weeks and her husband had no hesitation in leaving her. The hunters were absent for three full days and nights, and returned home soon after dusk on the fourth day, having had great success. When they landed at the beach they were surprised to see no lights in any of the houses except their own. Leaving two of his sons in the canoe, *Ne·chaklaxmq* and the other lad cautiously approached the dwelling. As they drew near, they realized that the light which shone forth was green and unearthly, and that the smoke, too, was greenish instead of white. Looking through the door, *Ne·chaklaxmq* saw his wife standing with bowed head dangling an infant in a cradle suspended from a cord. This is a common method of soothing a child, but *Ne·chaklaxmq* was horrified to see that the cradle had been fastened to the cord upside down so that the infant was hanging head downwards, with no visible fastening to prevent it from falling to the floor.

"Look out! The child will fall and be killed," *Ne·chaklaxmq* called to his wife, but she did not seem to hear him.

The husband entered the house and touched her, but she trembled to know as he did so. The watching son cried out in fear and horror. *Ne·chaklaxmq* hastily left the house and the two returned to the canoe, after ascertaining that no living people were in the village.

The four hunters slept that night in their canoe, and next morning *Ne·chaklaxmq* prowled around until he found the villagers hiding in the forest not far away. They explained that, two days after his departure, his wife had given birth to a child, but the after-birth had not come away and she had died. It was the first time that this had ever happened and the people had fled from the village in fear.

Ne·chaklaxmq knew that the ghosts would dance to welcome his wife on the fourth day after her death, and he determined to attempt to rescue her at that time. On the evening of the second day, the fourth after her death, he and his three sons lurked in the vicinity of their house. Pre-

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·775 sently they heard the sound of drums, which they knew were herald the approach of ghosts, so they hid themselves on the roof of their own house in such positions that they could peer down within. In some unknown way the four had been granted the power to see ghosts, for they observed the entry of what looked like ordinary human beings, though in reality they were weirdos. These took their places like spectators at a ceremony, while several with hunting sticks seated themselves behind the fire as singers. As they struck their batons on the floor, one of the ghosts began to dance in time to the music, and *Ya'skhkaomq*'s wife came to life and watched. Two ghosts who were directing the ceremony called out, "[illegible]," which are words in the language of the dead and serve to invite some supernatural being from above to one of their ceremonies. In answer to the call, there came a thump on the roof, marking the descent of the visitor. This gave the dead woman power to move and she began to dance around the fire. She had completed one circuit and was on her second when one of the ghosts called out:

"Take care! I feel as if living people were watching us."

Some of the ghosts at once left the house and searched the bushes near it.

"Ha," they said on their return, "We see is sure."

Ya'skhkaomq's wife continued her dance, and as she was circling the fire for the third time, her husband whispered to his sons:

"As she goes round the fourth time we must jump down, catch her, and fly to our canoe."

When the woman was midway in her fourth circuit, the four leapt into the house and *Ya'skhkaomq* clutched his wife in his arms, but she crumbled to bones at his touch and the ghosts rushed away, whistling angrily, leaving the four alone, *Ya'skhkaomq* holding the skeleton of his wife. Then they went and joined the other inhabitants of the village in their hiding-place. Everyone was anxious to hear the narrative of the strangers, though some did not believe the story. *Ya'skhkaomq* made no further effort to rescue his wife, knowing that it would be hopeless after the fourth day when the ghosts had welcomed her as one of themselves.

An Involuntary Visit to the Land of Ghosts

A few years after the first settlement of the earth, four Kimsquit men went into the mountains to hunt game. The first night of their absence, before they had killed any game, they lay down to sleep in a cave, thinking themselves safe out, but when they awoke in the morning they were amazed to find themselves in a strange country. They were near a wooded valley through which flowed a river resembling the Dean, but instead of

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the sun, there was shining in the sky a sphere that gave forth a green, visible light. Unknown to them, the cave in which they had been sleeping had turned over on itself and projected them into the land of ghosts. The four brothers descended into the valley and walked up the bank of the river until they saw a large village on the other bank. It seemed to contain countless inhabitants who were amusing themselves by rolling to and fro with their feet a large, round object like a football. This led the four travellers to think they must be in the land of ghosts, though they were puzzled to know how they had reached it. They called across to the players, but though the river was narrow and though they shouted loudly and repeatedly, they received no answer. The reason for this, as they later discovered, was that the language of ghosts differs from that of human beings, and neither can hear the speech of the other. After a considerable interval, the third brother, who was always happened to yawn noisily, all the ghosts heard this sound and stopped their play to see whence it had come. They saw the four at once and called to them that they would send a canoe to bring them across the river. Two of the ghosts removed a large, skin canoe and paled it across, but as the bow reached the bank where they were standing, the eldest brother pointed out to his fellows that it was transparent. They all looked down into it and could see sticks and stones on the bottom of the river through the floor of the craft. They were somewhat nervous about trusting themselves in such a canoe, but the eldest shut his eyes and jumped aboard without wishing, followed by the other three. They were landed on the bank in front of the village, but before any one of the four could set foot on the ground the ghosts who had come crowding around picked them up in their arms. Each was passed by his bearer to another further inland, and in this way they were quickly thrown from hand to hand until deposited within the house of the chief, without using their feet and without a single ghost having had to move from the spot where he had been standing.

The four human beings found themselves in a large house crowded with what seemed to be people, but when they knew must be ghosts. At that distant period, men were wiser than they are today, and the brothers realized that the chief must be *Able-tatal himself*. Ghost-heralds brought food to the four strangers, but they concealed it beneath their capes instead of eating it, remembering what they had heard at Kumquit that a person who ate the food of the dead can never leave their home. The chief was kind to them and somewhat facetiously told them that they would come to harm if they stayed in a country where the people played as much as they did in his. He added that they could return to earth by the same route by which they had come, and advised them to

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534 715 heavy luck. After so short a visit as they thought polite, they asked to be ferried back across the river and returned their oops to the cave where they had slept the previous night. It was dark by this time and they lay down to sleep. During the night the cave entered on itself once more, and in the morning they were delighted to find themselves in the mountains above the Dean River.

This was the first time that anyone had penetrated to the land of ghosts, and the friends of the four brothers were intensely interested in the account of their experiences. It was October at the time, but they explained that it was late winter in the land below. No one knows why or how the four brothers had received the power to pass into the land of ghosts, although it is rumored that Algonkins once have guarded them the keys.

A Kitkata Story of a Descent to the Land of Ghosts

177 534 715 The following story was related by an elderly man who had heard it about ten years previously from three Christian Kitkata who had been his fellow-passengers on a steamship between Vancouver and Bella Coola. It is not a Bella Coola story, although it has been circulated among members of the tribe as an interesting tale. The facts recorded in it do not agree entirely with their beliefs, but their is a number of an [1219] passengers to the Bella Coola who, having their own knowledge, consider it quite natural that the other tribes should have other concepts.

534 715 About one year before the story was told, a Kitkata woman had died, leaving her husband and one grown-up daughter to mourn her. The husband refused to be comforted, and used to fall into a paroxysm of weeping whenever he saw any of his wife's clothing or goods. About a week after her funeral he took her clothing to the cemetery intending to burn it, but instead sat down on the ground to weep. Presently he noticed a passage beside him, down which he crawled until he came to a dim, cold land more prosperous than this world, where he wandered along aimlessly till he heard the sound of singing and hid himself behind a clump of bushes. There seemed to be five or six groups of people in different sections of the country, and the song was taken up in succession by each group. When he had remained in his hiding-place for some time, two people in rags, white clothes passed so close to him that he could hear the rustling of their garments. He recognized one of the

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pin were for on his wife, and the other as a fellow villager she had died some time previously. Somewhat perturbed at finding his wife apparently on friendly terms with a male ghost, the husband decided to return home and ponder before taking any rash steps.

He crawled back along the passage to the cemetery and at once heard his wife's chirping. When he reached home his daughter, who had been worried at his long absence, saw that her father had been weeping and tried to console him. He told her mother sternly not to scream; and, while eating, announced what he had seen that day, stating his determination to return in the morning and bring back his dead wife. His daughter begged him not to do so, reminding him that her mother had died of her own volition and that it would be dangerous to bring her back to earth, but the grieving father paid no attention to her appeal.

Next morning the man went again to the cemetery where he found the passage still open. He went down, hid in the same thicket, and heard the same singing taken up by group after group. As on the previous day, after a considerable period of waiting, his wife passed by in company with the same male ghost. The husband rushed forth, seized her and shewed every her companion, who swiftly disappeared. The woman offered no resistance, and her husband told her that he was going to take her back home again. The two returned to the passage, the man guided his dead wife through it to the cemetery and thence they set out for their home.

Meanwhile the daughter, dreading what might happen, had remained within. As her father opened the door, she crouched at the side of the house and saw that his hand was held out as if he were leading someone, though only one figure was visible to her. Its fear increased when she heard lighter footsteps accompanying his, as the rustling of clothing. She heard her father call his wife, whom he addressed by name, that he would leave her in the main part of the house for a moment while he arranged the bedrooms, he not about this, as though the daughter eagerly looked for her mother, she was invisible. When the father returned, he led his wife to the bedroom, but to the daughter it seemed as if he had put out his arm to guide nothing was tangible there at all. The frightened girl could hear her father asking questions and giving answers as if in conversation, but her mother's voice was inaudible. The daughter heard her father ask his wife how she like the land below and, judging from the brief conversation, concluded that she had said it was preferable to the land of the living except for the scarcity of food. The mother must have added that the nine ghosts via the house of

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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534 human beings, knock crumbs to the ground with mirror hooks, and
•775 punish by beating with the same barbs anyone who offends them by picking up such morsels. The girl heard her father say that in future he would be more careful to throw fragments of food on the fire, since he now knew that these were not only desired by the dead, but were necessary to them. Her mother must have asked whether they had eaten all the dried salmon, for her father answered:

"No. We have been so grief-stricken at your death that we have eaten hardly anything."

After a pause the girl heard her father say "All right," and judged that her mother had said she would go to get some. In a moment the door opened, though no one appeared, and the thoroughly awed girl heard the sound of light footsteps. She saw the ropes with which the box was bound unloosened without visible agent, and the salmon piled in a neat heap on the floor, then the bundle seemed to rise of its own accord and pass out through the front door without human aid. After an interval the father appeared and asked his daughter where her mother had gone. The frightened girl told what she had seen, and both were amazed and puzzled. At last it dawned on the grieving husband that his wife must have stolen the food for the benefit of her friends below and had returned to her new home.

The husband, now twice bereaved, was filled with woe at this second loss, which was compounded as his wife had said nothing of her intention of leaving. After deliberating for several days, he descended again to the land of ghosts, heedless of his daughter's appeals. He concealed himself in the same spot as before, and soon heard singing; but this time the words and tune were different and he listened intently. To his horror, the chorus was of the ingenuity of a dead woman who had revisited her home, deceived her husband, and brought every a supply of dried salmon for the use of the ghosts. He recognized that the song must refer to his own wife and, grieved and humiliated, he returned home forthwith. He warned his daughter to say nothing of what had occurred and she obeyed his instructions, not wishing their shame to become known. A few days later, however, a number of friends gathered to console the husband; he became intoxicated, told the guests his adventure, and taught them the songs sent by the dead.

A Carrier Story of an Ascent to the Land of the Dead

777 The following, like the last, is not a Bella Coola story. It
534 is one known to a number of Kimsquit and deserves inclusion

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among Bella Coola tales if only for the reason that stories of foreign origin, when told sufficiently often, tend to be considered indigenous and the facts recorded in them accepted and incorporated into Bella Coola belief. This factor is undoubtedly responsible for many conflicting elements in their theology. The following story has every indication of Christian influence but is not less interesting on that account, as illustrating the process of assimilating new ideas into mythology.

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About 1870, *Mämaitja*,* a Kwakiutl Indian from Owun Lake, and his brother were trapping beaver in one of the lakes of the interior. They were both good hunters and every morning killed at least one of the animals. *Mämaitja* was a strong, apparently healthy man, but one morning he fell dead. His grief-stricken brother was puzzled to know what to do with the body. It was winter, and the heavy snow and frozen earth made interment impossible, while lack of fire-wood made cremation out of the question, so he meekly tied up the corpse to await better weather. Meanwhile *Mämaitja* had gone sleigh, where he saw a large house containing many rooms. He went to the first of these, where a man was sitting with a huge book before him.

"What do you want?" asked the man.

Mämaitja did not answer and his questioner continued:

"Your name is not here. Why did you come?"

This happened in one room after another, for *Mämaitja* tried them all. Finally, at the end of the house, he came to the seat of the chief, who said to him:

"You have made a mistake. The time for you has not yet come. If you want to stay, you can do so by drinking this."

He showed *Mämaitja* a glass containing a green liquid.

"If not," continued the chief, "you must drink this," and he showed him another glass filled with a white liquid.

Throughout this speech *Mämaitja* had heard a strange rumbling and wondered what could be its cause. Happening to glance out through a window at the rear of the house, he saw a huge, metal ball, constantly revolving and giving forth the rumbling sound as it did so. From within

*This story was related by Jim Pollard, an elderly Kimsquit, who stated that as a young man he had known *Mämaitja*, who was about fifty years older than he. This tale is interesting as showing the manner in which a miraculous account can become accepted as fact within a short space of time. *Mämaitja* must have been a man of imaginative temperament who was overawed when he had experienced hardships told to him by some white man.

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B C 539 775 came wailing voices and at intervals an agonized face appeared at one of the many small openings in the surface of the sphere. The supreme being, for the chief was none other, told him that those within the ball were evil persons, those who had committed theft or murder during life. Mînaniye, though innocent of these crimes, decided that he would be safer on earth and asked for the glue with the white liquid, which he hastily drained. The supreme deity inquired what present he would like as token of the visit, and he requested a beaver-arm, that is, one with a crooked handle such as beaver use.[a]

At the moment when Mînaniye drank the white liquid, his brother saw his body move very slightly. He hastily warmed some mountain goat grease and with this rubbed his face and mouth. At first he was unable to speak, owing to his muscles having become rigid from the cold, but they loosened gradually so that he was able to recount his experiences. Mînaniye's son, being of supernatural origin, was invisible to all human beings, but this did not affect his powers, and from that time onwards the owner could catch beaver as easily as other men could catch salmon.

B 177 539 775 [826] The information contained in this story does not correspond at all with Bella Coola beliefs concerning the fate of the dead. They tell it, and assume that such experiences are normal for dead *Kusiut*, though unknown to their own people.

[a] The Bella Coola know that beaver must have come of this kind to accomplish their work, although white people, deceived by the invisibility of them, believe the animals are their meat. Mînaniye received as one of this type.

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though they may be to the white man. It is hoped that the preceding illustrations, drawn from recent times, will explain the natural attitude of the Bella Coola better than incidents from folk-lore of the distant past.

Disregarding thoughts which, since they are caused by the spiritual elements of the human body, are ever present, relations with the supernatural may be divided into the following categories:

(a) Appearance of supernatural beings from which neither good nor bad results follow. Strictly speaking, every fleeting sight of a supernatural being belongs to this category, but it will be convenient to describe only experiences of a peculiar kind, such as the Bella Coola call *qua ahlémaqlaiaic*. Usually manifestations of the supernatural have certain effects; consequently, there are relatively few incidents of this kind recorded.

(b) Supernatural aid vouchsafed to a man or a woman in distress. There are many tales illustrating this, which are told and retold to the children. In most cases the assistance is given to one who has unknowingly, according to Bella Coola concepts, fallen into misfortune.

(c) Supernatural good luck. This may be obtained by anyone, and consists of the acquisition of a supernatural object to attract, not only fish and animals, as if it were a power hair, but money and goods as well.

(d) Acquisition of shamanistic power, with or without the ability to cure the sick. This may be received from one of two sources:

(a) *Tlo-qoltlóa* or some other supernatural being.

(b) Ghosts, which are likewise supernatural.

(e) Obtaining prophetic power direct from the supreme god. There are few instances of this, and none that is ascribed to a remote period. It is possible that all examples of this kind are to be attributed to indirect Christian influence.

(f) Obtaining power from a supernatural being localized in a particular spot. This usually takes the form of success when

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bitterly regretted his own cowardice, for the wonderful cures stopped, whereas, had he accepted the supernatural power, he would have been able to perform them.

SHAMANS FROM THE DEAD

There remain to be described shamans from the dead, whose abilities and prerogatives are almost identical with those already described. They obtain their power either from the visitation of a ghost in this world, or by a journey to the land of shades below. The following incident explains why shamans alone can hold converse with ghosts.

Once, long ago, the lover of a young girl died. She was so heart-broken due to her agony, four days after his burial, she lay down on his grave to weep. The dead man was able to visit her and to her alone she gave birth to a child, who, like its father, was a ghost, with drawn face and glaring eyes. The perturbed woman smiled to in the house, her love overcoming a feeling of repulsion, and when she returned to her home she endeavoured to prevent her own mother handling the infant, knowing that she would be horrified. The grandmother insisted, but as soon as she saw the ghastly appearance of the child she dropped it in horror, and the infant vanished.

Since then there has been a barrier, resembling a wall of smoke, between mortals and the dead. If the old woman had not dropped her grandchild, the living would still be able to converse with their deceased friends and relatives.

Nowadays, shamans alone are able to lift the barrier and discourse with the ghosts of those who have departed. These are quite common visitors to the land of the living, but only a shaman can understand their languages, of which one is a series of whistles, and the other resembles the screams or speech made by a roquelaure individual. Shamans can learn what the dead require and so transmit the knowledge to the relatives of the deceased. So, long ago, shamans whose powers were derived from animals were able to teach mortals the proper methods of hunting, and the taboos enjoined, as a

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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shaman from the dead once visited the land of ghosts and learnt their needs. They informed him that food and clothing thrown on the ground did not reach them, and that in order to do so it must be cast on the fire. Instead of journeying to the land of the dead some shamans receive their powers from ghosts who ascend to this earth, as the following account describes.

Within the lifetime of an elderly Bella Coola informant, a certain woman, *Xēmulxnūsis* by name, left her house one evening for a few minutes. When she came back she was crazy. Her face was green, her mouth and face distorted and twisted, she could only whistle when she tried to talk, and kept endeavouring to walk on her hands. Taking her blankets, she went through the motions of washing them, but instead of using water, she dragged them to and fro through the ashes of the central fire, until, utterly exhausted, she lay down. By these symptoms it was recognized that a ghost had stricken her with madness, and several shamans of the dead were called upon for help. For a long time their efforts were fruitless. Then one of them obtained some stained cedar-wood pads. While another conducted the frantic beating of sticks, the leading practitioner waved one of the pads through the smoke of the central fire and laid it, with hemlock bark and dyed cedar-bark, on the patient's face. After leaving it there a few moments, he took it off and, while the beating of sticks was stilled, threw it out the door. When this had been done four times the woman was restored to sanity. Later on she said she had seen the ghost of a certain *Tsiwaut*, a man recently deceased. Emerging from her trance she found herself in her house surrounded by numerous people and the shamans working over her. If he had not been able to cure her, she would have died; in fact, it was impossible to discover whether the Bella Coola regarded this woman as having been cured of an illness, or as having been restored from the dead.

Xēmulxnūsis called for the singers to whom she sang four songs, relating what she had seen. They described how she stood by a fire in the land below, where the sun travelled from west to east, and where everything differed from this earth, though reminiscent of it. The singers learnt the songs, and it was to their music that the woman danced on later occasions. She was able ever afterwards not only to cure maladies caused by ghosts but to talk with them. For this purpose she was in the habit of lying down at night in the graveyard, looking down into the land of the dead which was open to her, and conversing with the inhabitants in a strange whistling language which the living could hear, but could not

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understand. She was also able to gaze downwards at the edge of the central fire nearest to the door.

Awaitlâkmaxs, an old shaman from the dead who died not long ago, obtained his power by chancing to visit their land. The themes of his songs were of the land of the dead where, he said, there were many people; where those who had been rich on earth were rich, but where those who had been poor were still poor; where those who had been blind could see, and those who had been maimed were whole. He told of *Palulâl*, a legless creature who lives in the land below, but can travel with amazing speed. In fact this shaman stated that it was he who was sent when the ghosts wished to communicate with the living, a statement contradicted by others. He told further of *Kaxwitsâlôs a*, a supernatural woman resident there, who is able to pick berries with phenomenal rapidity. But this talent avails her little, since her basket is full of the teeth of dead men who devour the fruit as fast as she picks them. It was *Awaitlâkmaxs* who described how in the land below there were only two enormous trees of the kind known to the Bella Coola as *hîl*, under the shade of which the ghosts played a game resembling football with huge, light balls.

A dead person usually chooses one of his own relatives as the proper person on whom to bestow the power of a shaman, but their actions in this respect can neither be coerced nor enjoined. Ceremonial chastity is of assistance, and power can usually be obtained by anyone who lies four days and four nights, face downwards, on a new grave. Nor does every sight of a deceased person bring with it this faculty; in fact, ghosts are greatly dreaded since they usually cause harm to the beholder. On one occasion the mother of an elderly Bella Coola woman left the house one evening, to return shortly with her face screwed up into a ghastly smile, green in colour, and with saliva dribbling from her mouth. She was quite mad. A shaman from the dead succeeded in curing her, or it may have been in restoring her to life, and she was able to tell how she had seen what she took to be a man with face averted. She

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called out to him, and then remembered no more. It was obvious that she had seen a ghost.

It is over diseases caused by ghosts that a shaman from the dead has power. If a person picks up and eats any morsels which he has dropped he will usually suffer, because, though he thinks the crumbs have fallen, they have really been pulled from his hands by a hungry ghost, who thus showed his desire for food. By picking up and eating the fragments, the man thwarts a dead person who retaliates by forcing some sickness into him. Ghosts may visit this land of the living and ask their relatives for food or clothing, but mortals, unable to hear the speech of the dead, are unaware of the requests of their deceased relatives, and so do not answer them. The irritated ghosts respond by causing sickness. In such cases a shaman from the dead is able to suck out the cause of the ill, and sometimes to display it as a bone, twig, or other small object and at the same time to tell the sufferer what it was that his relatives desired. Like ordinary shamans, a shaman from the dead uses his own discretion whether or not to employ the violent beating of sticks, and like his fellow-practitioner receives payment from those whom he has helped. There are no fixed charges, but a successful shaman is always wealthy.

The intimate contact of ghosts with shamans has already been mentioned in connection with the ability of the latter to learn from the ghost of a murdered person whom he believes to be his slayer.

There is one method of sacrificial curing practised by shamans from the dead alone. If the sickness refuses to yield to ordinary methods, the practitioner makes ten cedar-bark vessels, fills these with grease and places them near the fire, one between it and the door, one on the inner side, and four on either side of it, parallel to the side walls of the house. By each vessel are placed two small wooden figures, roughly carved to represent men, and decorated with dyed and undyed cedar-bark. After endeavouring to suck forth the disease, with or without the assistance of the frenzied beating of sticks, the

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shaman pours the grease on the central fire, and throws on it also the figures and some dried salmon. Thus propitiated, it is believed that the dead will be more likely to allow the sickness to be sucked forth.

Shamans from the dead perform conjuring feats and dramatic performances of the same type as ordinary shamans. Until he gives his first dance a newly created shaman is known as a *koo*, the same word that is used for a *hamat'sa* initiate, and during this period he wears the shaman's collar of intertwined dyed and undyed cedar-bark. If he is wealthy and influential, a shaman will repeat his dance every fourth year. Such a performance can be held at any season, although the usual time is after the *hamat'sa* ceremonies. The dramatic representations are of scenes witnessed in the land below, though sometimes they are done in a reverse manner, following the practice of the dead in doing things strangely. Thus one shaman reported that the ghosts wore very long blankets, but when he danced he wore one that came only to his hips. The method of singing is the same as that employed by ordinary shamans, but one whose power is derived from the dead dances with head bent downwards, his free hand pointing to the ground with first finger extended. Also his cry of "*ewai, ewai, ewai,*" uttered at intervals with a deep cadence, differs from that used by ordinary shamans. A dance always terminates with the distribution of food to validate the ceremony.

Like ordinary shamans, those from the dead cannot transmit their power. At death their songs too are lost, unless they choose to give them to a friend who is also a shaman from the dead. This is obviously contrary to the theoretical belief that all songs have been obtained during revelations, but is not at all contrary to the Bella Coola practice of having the singers assist the visionaries in "remembering" their visions.

The following tale, although drawn from the distant past, is a typical illustration of one of the many ways in which shamanistic power is received from the dead.[1]

[1] Five stories of similar type have been included in vol. I, chap. VIII to explain the life of the dead, and others are grouped together in the next chapter.

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The Lads Who Visited the Home of the Dead

Long ago there was a Bella Coola man who had two sons. His wife died, and presently he remarried, becoming in time the father of an infant daughter. The second wife abused her step-sons, their father neglected them, and the two were poor and miserable, their best friend a faithful dog. When the people were invited to a feast, the lads were frequently overlooked as being of no importance, and their step-mother used upbraid them for lacking the spirit to resent this insult. They could not answer, but merely bided their time. The two used to sleep on a raised platform behind the fire in hope of receiving supernatural assistance, and always left the house by a hole in the floor rather than through the door, thus observing one of the essentials for those who wish to obtain aid.

One day the two set out on an expedition into the mountains, carrying skin with which to make moccasins. As they were sitting at this work, the dog, which had followed its masters as usual, rushed off barking furiously. The brothers hurriedly finished the shoes and followed the animal in time to see it disappear into an opening after a porcupine. The elder leading, the two entered the cave which grew wider; on and on they went until finally they could see light in the distance. Guided by the barking of the dog ahead of them, they finally emerged into daylight, to find themselves in a new world, a land in which there was a large river and a sky resembling that above the earth, but different. The dog was waiting for them and had stopped barking.

The brothers set off up the river bank and presently saw on the other side a large town in which many people were moving about. The younger brother could see it plainly, but to the elder it was vague and indistinct. They called out to the people:

"Hi! Please send a canoe for us."

Though they called repeatedly, no one paid the slightest attention; the people seemed to be deaf, unaware of their presence. The two brothers remained all day opposite the village, calling out at intervals without result, and all the time becoming more hungry and disgusted. Towards dusk one of them yawned noisily. To their surprise there was a commotion in the town; the yawn had been heard although their cries had not. They could hear the people on the other side of the river discussing the noise.

"Let us send a canoe to fetch whoever may be over there" was the gist of their remarks.

Presently a canoe was poled out from the farther shore, and held in position by the ferryman beneath the bank on which the brothers stood, necessitating a jump of two or three feet to reach it. As the elder prepared to leap into it, he glanced down and saw that the stones on the

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river floor were visible through the canoe as if it had no bottom at all. He drew back in fear. Though he knew it not, they had come to the land of the dead, where bottomless canoes and other phenomena were to be expected. The younger brother, to whom the village had been plainly visible, had no fear, but leapt down bravely, and was poled across to the farther shore, where he soon disappeared from his brother's sight among the throng of villagers.

The elder youth, left alone with the dog, sat down and wept, thinking that he had indeed lost his brother. After a time he continued his journey up the river-bank where presently he saw a bridge. He eagerly went over, intending to turn back towards the village where his brother had gone, but as soon as he had crossed he lost all thought of his original purpose and continued his journey upstream instead. Presently he heard the sound of adze strokes, and drew near, cautiously, until he could see the man who was using the tool.

"Why have you come here?" the woodcutter asked.

"Oh, for no special reason," the boy replied. "I should like to see your chief."

The woodcutter guided him to the house and when near called out, "The stranger wants to see our chief."

People came rushing out of the houses and the lad realized that he had come to the land of the wolves. His guide directed him to the chief's house which he entered through a doorway cut in a totem-pole. Within, the chief greeted him in a kindly fashion, saying:

"Please sit down for a little while until I can bring some friends to play with you."

He went outside, but presently returned and led him through the door to some moose-skins which he had spread on the ground under the totem-pole. Then he called the friends, who were four wolves. They came leaping out of the house and devoured the young man; but though his body was in four pieces inside the stomachs of the four animals, he was still conscious. After eating him, the beasts devoured the dog. Presently the wolves vomited into a dish, whereupon the chief re-formed what had been voided into a human being, and the lad was as before he had been eaten. Then the same was done to his dog.

The chief now beat once upon a drum as a signal for the people to adorn themselves for a dance; again he beat, and they assembled. Apparently all was ready, but the boy realized that the leader of the orchestra was absent. Again and again the chief beat on the drum, until at last the missing man drew near. He entered singing:

"A lad went out with his younger brother and his dog. A porcupine caused the mountains to open for him."

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As he sang, smoke could be seen rising from behind the house; the youth could see that it came from Porcupine's fire, but the song explained that it was eagle down for their mortal guest. The singer repeated his song; more smoke ascended from another place, which the lad saw was Mountain Goat's fire. The song was sung again and again, and at each repetition new smoke could be seen, from the fires of Deer, Black Bear, Whistler, Marten, Beaver, Wolverine, in fact from all animals except Grizzly Bear. The chief explained to his guest that whenever he wanted meat he could go hunting and would be able to see the smoke rising from the fires of various animals.[1]

"Tomorrow you will return home," he continued. "Your brothers (meaning the four wolves that had eaten him) will go with you to carry some presents."

Next morning [it was really a year later] the wolves tied up gifts of smoked meat in blankets woven of goat wool and sewn blankets of whistler, black bear, and marten. The meat, though a large quantity, was reduced to so small a compass that the four animals carried it without difficulty. The five travelled back to the spot where the two brothers had sat down to make their moccasins, and at that point the wolves returned to their home.

Now for the first time the lad remembered his brother, and began to weep bitterly, thinking that he must be dead. But presently he heard the sound of footsteps inside the cave through which the porcupine had guided him; they grew nearer, until the younger boy emerged. The elder was overjoyed, but his delight was turned to dismay when he saw that his brother's face was green and haggard, with a strange expression; that he had lost all the flesh from his body, and that his clothes, the same that he had worn when they parted company, were torn to tatters. His brother's appearance affected him so much that he fell down dead. The younger lad, however, had been made a shaman by the dead, so he quickly restored his brother. They exchanged experiences; the younger saying that the dead had given him the name *Kipdzs*. His appearance was vastly improved when he clad himself in a black bear blanket and two whistler cloaks brought by the other from the village of the wolves. The two returned home, entering the house secretly and lying down at once

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[1] To understand this the reader must remember the firm Bella Coola belief that all animals can assume different forms. To the ordinary person they appear as beasts, but in reality they lead lives resembling those of humans, having houses, fires, blankets, and other comforts. An individual who is able to see the smoke of their fires will have no difficulty in finding the homes of the animals and hence will have great success in hunting. The only one this lad was to avoid was Grizzly Bear, who was so fierce that pursuing him would be dangerous.

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on their old bed on the raised platform behind the fire. No one knew of their arrival.

Although neither the father nor the step-mother of the lads had shown them any affection when they were at home, so soon as they were lost both had been overwhelmed with grief. They lost all energy and, sunk in misery and self-examination, would sometimes lie for days on opposite sides of the house, not even keeping a fire alight. The other inhabitants of the village considered them beneath contempt, and often at night they would relieve themselves in the house of the sorrowing couple. The only person with any energy in the household was their daughter, now a child about five years old. On the day of her half-brothers' return she happened to throw some rubbish on the fire and, as it flared up, she saw long hair hanging down from the raised bed. She called out to her mother:

"Perhaps my brothers have come home. I see the hair hanging down."

But the mother answered: "Be quiet. Your brothers have been away for a year, we do not even know how they died."

The little girl was not satisfied. She threw more rubbish on the fire and again she saw the long pendent hair. When she told her mother the woman cried out angrily:

"Be quiet, you little liar!"

The two brothers had been listening to this dialogue, and the elder now took a mountain goat bladder filled with grease which he lowered so that it swung to and fro beneath the platform. When the little girl again threw rubbish on the fire her eye was attracted by the swinging object which she took and carried to her mother with the remark:

"My brothers must certainly have come home, see what they have brought."

Now the woman believed, and carried the bladder to her husband on the other side of the house, telling him the glad news. Together they went to the raised platform where the elder brother greeted them, but lied, saying:

"I am alone, I do not know what has happened to my younger brother."

In his delight at the return of one of his sons the father became sufficiently energetic to cut some firewood, such an unusual undertaking that some of his neighbours came to ascertain the meaning of it. He told them the news, which was passed around until the whole village knew, and all assembled in the house except those who, having polluted it, were now frightened to appear. The two brothers did not come down, and only the elder spoke to those gathered below. One malicious person tried

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to injure him by throwing on to the roof not far from his head a pad stained with menstrual blood, but *Kipulse*, by means of his magical power, knew that it was there, and whispered to his brother, who passed the information on to father, so that the old man was able to remove the pad before either of his sons was injured. The elder brother told the people where he had left large supplies of meat. This they brought in with great rejoicing the next day.

Although the two brothers remained constantly concealed, rumours began to circulate that the elder was not alone. After a time it became generally known that the supposition was correct, and that the younger brother had received a shaman's power from the dead. A malicious chief made the statement that he did not believe this and cast insinuations as to why a shaman should conceal himself. *Kipulse* used his power to inject sickness into the man and after a few days he died, though no one knew the cause.

Then the elder had said, "My younger brother has told me that you should not bury the dead man too quickly. Let him try to restore him."

Some of the deceased's relatives were willing, others were not, but at last they agreed to give *Kipulse* an opportunity to show his skill, and he revived the dead man without any difficulty. In his gratitude the chief gave the restorer his daughter as a wife. Not long after, another chief expressed his disbelief and again the shaman caused him to become sick. This time the people at once appealed to *Kipulse* for help; this was refused, but when the man died he restored him, as he had done on the previous occasion. As before, he received a wife as a mark of gratitude. The reputation of *Kipulse* was now established; many dead persons were brought to him to be restored and through the presents given to him he was able to give potlatches. Nor did he forget his elder brother, but obtained wives for him too. Meanwhile the latter was having great success in hunting and brought in so much meat that he was able to give a potlatch at which his younger brother danced and was given a name.

One evening,* not long after this time, a little girl about six years old kept crying and crying; nothing would pacify her. The parents tried to soothe her but at last the mother said:

"Let's go away and leave her, the dead will take her."

So all in the household withdrew to the bedrooms, leaving the girl weeping beside the central fire. Presently her cries grew fainter, and the mother rushed out, but her daughter had vanished. The sobs were coming from beneath the ground, and they realized that it was indeed the dead who had taken the mother at her word and had seized the child. It sounded as if the girl were just beneath the surface of the ground, so the

*Cf. a similar story (I, p. 93).

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people threw missiles sticks on the fire and followed to the graveyard, where the wives hid them. They took sticks and dug furiously, but could not catch up to her, for the mile grew farther and farther as the child was carried before.

In their despair the parents called *Ejuba*.

"All right," he replied, "I will try to bring her back. Please have me alone in my house and I will revive the dead in a hour."

He collected all the vessels with wine in them from the village and gave one to each of a number of swimmers whom he stationed around the walls of his house hidden beneath the roof. Then he invited the dead, who assembled with the exception of the woman who was taking care of the little girl. After repeated invitations she too came, and took her place on the chief's seat behind the fire, with the weeping child in her arms. *Ejuba* gave the signal and his swimmers emptied the vessels. At once the dead people became impotent and sank in heaps of bones to the floor, leaving the little girl apparently unharmed. The parents picked her up eagerly and the bones were swept out to the graveyard.

The child kept crying out for salmon berries, which were unprocurable, as it was winter. So the parents appealed again to *Ejuba*, who understood that what she wanted were snowberries, which are an salmon berries to the dead, in whose land she must have eaten them. She would not confess she ate, so they ate not nutritious, she were dead, nor could she again be restored to life.

A similar version omits any mention of a step-mother as the reason for the boys leaving home, and simply begins with their following the dog into a cleft of the mountains. The dead, after receiving the younger boy as in the preceding tale, try to make him eat "crawberries," which are to resemble the eyes of corpses. Meanwhile, the elder youth encounters the wolves, but in this case is given instructions about entering their house, whereby he escapes being eaten and is granted cordially and granted a boon before leaving. This is the ability to gain a desire by merely wishing for it. It is by exercising this power that he saves his long-lost brother. In this account the younger boy's name received from the dead is *Kahakdewet*, and Death, *Sa-lem*, gives him a stick with which to lift him from his position on the lid of a coffin. In the end *Sa-lem*, his patron, recalls the young chemos to himself. This version, which is the more abbreviated of the two, makes no allusion to the attempted rescue of a child from the land of ghosts.

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several economical captivity and was, therefore, in a good position to receive premonitions of this kind. The next day, as they were paddling down the river, they came upon some treacherous ice. Forewarned, they hastily abandoned their canoe, one side of which was soon broken in the way *Tsälits* had described; if they had continued their journey they would certainly have been drowned.

The dreams thus far recorded have all been capable of simple explanation; in fact, their meaning is obvious, either visually or auditily. In addition, there are a number of types considered to be symbolic by the Bella Coola. There are no professional interpreters, but it is believed that in ancient times shamans learnt the significance of certain images and this knowledge has since been transmitted from generation to generation. [791] [956]

One type indicates a coming birth. If a woman dreams that she travels to some distant spot, under the ocean or into the mountains, and there takes something in her hand, it signifies that she will soon bear a male child; on the other hand, if she picks up some small object when gathering berries, a daughter will be born. A Kimsquit informant stated that before his birth, his mother dreamt that she had gone far under the mouth of the Dean River to the vicinity of *Lemaqua*'s house, where she had taken up a child. From this she knew she was pregnant and he was born in due course. If the scene of the dream is in the mountains, it means that the child will be a good hunter; if under water, that he will be a successful fisherman, as it proved in this case. There is a vague belief that death takes place either near the spot where the mother received indication of conception, or that the life and spirit of the deceased visit the place before setting out on their journey back from generation to generation. The old man from whom this information was obtained expects to meet death by drowning, though he is himself uncertain whether his premonition is due to his mother's dream or to the fact that there has been a tendency for this to occur in his family. 787* 843 787* [761] [775] 787*

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If a woman dreams that she has caught two salmon, two small birds, or is holding two infants, the birth of twins is foretold. This type of explanation is obvious; in fact, these examples lie on the border-line between direct and symbolic interpretations.

Another indication of approaching pregnancy is for a woman to dream of a dead relative; this means that the latter will soon be re-born. An elderly Kimsquit man mentioned that some fifty years earlier his mother dreamt that her dead mother came to her, saying that she was lonesome and wished to return. Soon afterwards she conceived, and the daughter born was considered to be the reincarnation of her own grandmother whose names she was promptly given. At the present time, this informant addresses his sister as sister, though he states that as a child he was taught to call her grandmother. As already mentioned, if a new-born infant is a reincarnation, the fact can often be recognized by holes or dimples in the ears, relics of previous borings for rings. Unless such a birth has been foretold in a dream, it is impossible to learn whom the child re-embodies.

A dream of frequent occurrence in Bella Coola is the return of the sleeper to the scenes and activities of his childhood. This always signifies a long life. Strangely enough, to dream of being nailed in one's coffin and carried to the grave is translated conversely, and likewise indicates a long life. It is remembered that there were many dreams of fire before the outbreak of the smallpox epidemic, so it has since been assumed that such presage an outbreak of this disease.

The only dreams of which the interpretations are wholly symbolic are those experienced by hunters. The Bella Coola explain this by saying that hunters always observe ceremonial chastity and their spirits are, therefore, in a receptive condition to supernatural impressions. When a man has set his traps, he is able to tell from his dreams whether or not any animals have been caught:

To dream that a canoe has been upset in the river and that

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* 534 * 756 * 787 cure, remembering what the latter had told him the previous evening. He feared to follow his friend's track, and, as night came on, climbed the rock and went to sleep, with the dog beside him. When it was quite dark he was wakened by the sound of footsteps and the tapping of a stick, and concluded that his partner was returning. The tent-flap was opened, as if by a person entering, but *Skyémlaix* could see nothing, so he kicked the dog to waken it and the animal began to bark furiously. At length he heard the steps withdraw and grow fainter as they climbed the mountain. Then *Skyémlaix* realized that his friend was dead, and that it was his life, [776] nothing round to visit his companions, which had come to him. Terrified, he lay awake all night with a blazing fire, and fled the next morning.

Skyémlaix chanced to meet several canoes soon after he had quitted his camp, and when he had told his story, their occupants turned back to hunt for *Nanaxwuxwâlâ*. About eighteen men searched all that day unsuccessfully, but a few days later another party found the corpse of the missing hunter. Presumably he had fired at the goat, though whether he struck it or not was not known, and the animal had charged. A wound in *Nanaxwuxwâlâ*'s groin showed where one of the horns had pierced him, and the two had rolled together to death over a precipice, the bodies becoming slightly separated in the fall.

Even if *Nanaxwuxwâlâ* had struck the goat it would not have availed him, since he was doomed to death. Not only had he taken great risks in hunting within one year of his previous experience, but his wife had been careless during his absence. He had long practised continence, and thereby was in a clean condition such as is approved by animals, and other supernatural beings, but this very condition rendered him peculiarly [785] [961] susceptible to any breaking of taboos by his wife. She had so far forgotten herself as to indulge in swinging when he was on the mountain, so that his death was inevitable. *Nanaxwuxwâlâ*'s relatives were very angry and prophesied that she would soon die. They were right, though whether her death was caused by a sorcerer, or by the accumulative power of their thoughts, is a matter no one can determine.

THE *Tlâqmâ'ás*

In the beginning of time, when *Aqunítsa* sent down *Kâlûdz* to this earth, he used his own initiative and travelled to the east for abalone-shell and to the west for copper. On returning to his settlement, he determined to try to lure to it a supernatural being, of whose existence he was aware from his previous life in the land above. Accordingly, he fashioned some of the copper into jingling bangles, which he fastened to [177] [854] the ropes of his infant's cradle. Before the introduction of white men's cradles, the Bella Coola were accustomed to tie a child in a cloth and

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regard to two figurines prepared to cause love has been described.

In addition to these non-specialized medicines, the Bella Coola are acquainted with remedies for several specific ailments caused by supernatural beings. One of these, to cure a person in whose head a toad was formed, has already been described.

To Prevent Blindness

Loss of sight is caused by a bat flying into a man's face, or by a raven's dropping falling upon him as he looks upward. After either accident, rub a feather from any bird in a raven's liver and draw it across the eyes. The person practising this cure must remain continent for one year or blindness will result.

To Prevent Paralysis of the Leg

If a man puts his foot in a hole so that he stumbles and falls, he will lose the use of that leg unless he counteracts the danger by placing a small stick upright in the cavity. In the summer of 1911 the writer noticed an old Bella Coola, with whom he was walking in the woods, break off a branch about two feet in length and place it in a hole where he had stumbled. He could give no explanation for his act, except that failure would cause him to lose the use of that leg.

To Prevent Paralysis of the Foot

If a person should happen to set his bare foot upon a dead wolf, he will lose the use of his lower limbs. The antidote to this has been forgotten within recent years, and patients are merely treated by shamans.

To Prevent the Revenge of a Ghost

The ghost of a murdered person usually tries to avenge himself on his killer, who can protect himself by obtaining a small piece from the body or clothing of his victim, a tuft of hair, a shred of cloth, or even a piece of earth from above his

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grave. When, presently, he feels sick and believes that the ghost has caused the malady, he throws the object he has obtained on a fire and allows the smoke to drift over his body. It is not known how this destroys the power of the dead victim. 755 776

At present (1922), in case of unexpected death in which murder is suspected, the relatives keep the body under lock and key and watch carefully to see whether anyone tries to gain access to it. To endeavour to do so would be considered proof of guilt. For the same reason, they may place boards over the grave and watch it for several weeks. As already described, a middle-aged woman died unexpectedly in 1922. Her father, believing that she had been murdered, expressed the opinion that a certain man was the criminal and that he would die within a year. He outlived this period by three weeks and it was generally agreed that the power of thought had been sufficient to cause the death. Apparently, the father shared this view and expected the ghost of the alleged murderer to be hostile, for he made two efforts to cover the shed where the body was lying, but the relatives of the deceased foiled him by locking all doors and windows. When he himself died a few weeks later, it was taken for granted that the ghost had exacted vengeance. [643]

To Cure a Malady Caused by a Sorcerer

The most complicated medicine about which information was obtained was one employed by an elderly Bella Coola who had incurred the enmity of a sorcerer. The latter had succeeded in breaking a triangular bone in the man's chest which would have caused his death if his mother had not consulted an old woman who knew the proper remedy for such an ailment. This knowledge had been handed down in her family for generations and she was rewarded lavishly for her services. It will be convenient to refer to the patient as X and the old woman who treated him as Y. 755 [424]

X's mother requested the services of Y who agreed to assist and called upon her husband to help her. They secured the

[illegible] McIlwraith B.3 (1922–1924) 1948
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[The Breaker Dance]

[575] [796] [648] [638] [921] crown their own superiority; they had paid those who had witnessed their prerogative, whereas the Bella Bella Breaker had merely cast a stone without animosity. Speeches were made, and it was decided that henceforth instead of waging true war in case of an error in ritual, it would be sufficient if the Breakers exacted punishment by destroying property. That is the explanation offered by this man as to why foreign war-parties have not more frequently upheld the law by raiding. As before stated, the writer is uncertain whether such beliefs are generally held by the Bella Coola and of course the historical accuracy of the information is still more doubtful.

THE *Kusiotum* DANCES

[575] [796] [434] [775] More awe-inspiring, though less terrifying, than the Cannibal, Scratch, and Breaker dances, are the *kusiotum* dances. In these the dancer undergoes mutilation and death, but his supernatural power enables him to return to life—at least so it appears to the credulous non-members. The five dances known as *kusiotum* are:

The Stomach-Cutting Dance;
The Beheading Dance;
The Drowning Dance;
The Burning Dance; and
The Swallowing of Hot Stones Dance.

Each of these comprises a distinct ceremonial of great complexity, but only one prerogative is required. That is, a man who has the *kusiotum* right may allow his stomach to be cut one year, and when he next performs will choose to display his ability to swallow hot stones. In this respect, it differs from all other *kusiut* ceremonies. Although a *kusiotum* dancer is entitled to exercise his privilege as often as he wishes, provided his marshals consent, the rite is so difficult that it is rarely carried out.

[773] As far as could be learnt, the Bella Coola of today have no

2: McDougall E-9 (1922-1924) 1948
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number of puppets is always made. Certain *kukwist*, known as *dzuyus*, have in connection with their dance prerogative, the ability to summon and display supernatural objects in the form of small puppets. These are sometimes patrons, more often not, and include not only beings having human form, but snakes, hummingbirds, and other creatures. By calling his being, an *dzuyus* receives strength which can be transmitted to someone else—so the uninitiated believe—by passing it into the recipient's body. Non-members are told that X suffers death from which he is resurrected by his own powers, reinforced by those passed into him by other members of the society through the transference of their puppets. The most potent "patron-puppet" is the giant toad. It is difficult for a white man to understand how intelligent people, as are many of the uninitiated, can be deluded into believing that the somewhat rudely carved wooden figures which they see moving before them are supernatural beings. Emphasis must again be laid on the awe, mystery, and power of the ceremonies in the eyes of those who do not understand them, and the very great skill shown by the carpenters in making use of hidden strings, trap-doors, and other devices to increase the dramatic effect. Puppets are guarded very carefully by their owners and are usually hidden in some cleft of the mountains. A well-constructed one is used when necessary for many years.

Other preparations must be made for the stomach-cutting. As in all other *kukwist* dances, deception is practised and X is not really disembowelled. Instead, a wooden, or copper, frame is made to shield his stomach; over this is arranged the skin of a deer or a dog, cut to cover him from chest to thighs, with even the navel imitated. This camouflage is held in place by his breech-cloth and by a strap passing around his chest. He wears a blanket which conceals most of the fastenings so that the artifice is not noticeable in the dim light of the house. The chief difficulty is to find a dog with skin the same colour as X's. Many animals are killed, and the fur removed by immersion in boiling water, but sometimes half the dogs of a village must

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[551]

cuss previously described. To the Bella Coola philosopher, apparently no explanation is needed of the manner in which *Saulx* was allowed to use his experience as the basis of a *kusiut* dance. The assumption is that he was a *kusiut* at the time of his experience, although this is not clearly stated. The last to use the name died about 1910, each *Saulx* having had the prerogative of giving the Thunder dance.

THE GHOST DANCE[*]

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796*
[775]
[752]
[424]

Among the numerous patrons of *kusiut* dancers are Ghosts. The term, *ixkaulaut*, applied to a shaman whose power is derived from a ghost, is also applied to *kusiut* with one as patron, but the two functionaries must not be confused. It is a fairly common prerogative and there are Ghost dancers in every village, their right depending in every case on some experience of an ancestor with a ghost. The following is an account of the manner in which *Sapas* of *Tcumaut* performed his ritual; it may be regarded as typical of all, and the dancer can be referred to as X.

At any time during the ceremonial season X consults with the marshals to decide upon a suitable time for his performance. On the evening preceding, normally the *qaslam* of some other *kusiut*, the marshals state that his call is imminent; X makes his final arrangements and asks the assistance of a number of his fellows.

575*
796*
787
[775]

When the *nalusam* rites of the following evening have been completed and the uninitiated have returned to their own houses, they are startled to hear whistling from the forest near at hand. It is not the instrumentally produced sound that accompanies the coming of a call, but tuneless whistling with the mouth; everyone knows that this is the language of ghosts. A visitation from them is by no means unknown, and always dreaded, so at once there is excitement and everyone cowers in the bedrooms. Presently heralds go through the village

[*] No relationship is implied with the dance of the same name among Indians of other culture areas.

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[The Ghost Dance]

they sit in silence, awaiting his arrival. Presently word is sent 575*
to him, for he is always hiding near, and he comes through the 996*
door and sits near the fire. But he does not resemble the man [787]
who left the village. His face and body have been stained [302]
green with crushed leaves, in imitation of the colour of the
dead; in his hand he carries a bone, said to be part of the leg
of a dead man, though in reality it is from a deer. After him
the ghosts enter one by one. They are a number of *kakuxiut* [302]
who have been painted black and green to give them an un-
earthly appearance; there is no fixed pattern, each following
his own, or the carpenter's ideas of the uncanny, though the
body colour on which the other tints are smeared is usually
white. Each dead man has a special name and each acts
accordingly in an eccentric way. One enters walking back-
wards, another hops on one leg, and a third walks on his [775]
hands—because ghosts always act in the opposite manner to
mortals. Each trills in a peculiar way and performs something
like a dance, waving his arms to and fro, up and down, con-
stantly pointing with one finger, before lying down close to the
central fire. With them enters a woman with painted face, [776]
clad in a blanket and carrying a basket on her back; she is
Al'xaxalag, who gathers berries in the land of the dead. She
begins to go around picking up any small articles that she sees
and depositing them in her basket, from which anyone picks
them out at will and returns them to the places whence they
had been taken. One of the first actors to appear carries a
stick for time beating, and acts as leader of the ghost singers.
Whenever a spark from the fire lights on one of the dead,
causing the latter to jump, the leader pounds violently with
his stick. When all are present, the leader beats time and they
prepare to leave. Ghosts are feckless, however; consequently, [775]
instead of going straight to the door, some go in one direction,
some in another, but all are at length shepherded outside. X
and his visitors, with a large number of *kakuxiut*, go to every
house in the village repeating the same procedure, in silence,
except for the trill of the dead men. The uninitiated do not

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[The Ghost Dance]

leave their bedrooms, but peer curiously and fearfully around the edge of the boards. Finally the party returns to X's house, whence the uninitiated hear the sound of sticks being beaten in a frenzied manner, but without the usual rhythmic conclusion. Each *kusiut* learns as he likes, because it is an affair of the dead with whom all things are queer and unnatural.

The ghosts wash and take their places in X's house where the singers are working on a new song. The words, as if spoken by the dancer, describe the land of the dead; how everything is green there; how the river flows from west to east so that the sun travels upstream; how the chiefs wished to make him a chief, and deceived him by not giving proper presents; how he visited the various towns scattered along the river, finding the home in one of the houses; and finally how the dead told him of any mistakes in ritual that had been committed in the Bella Coola villages, in Kimsquit, or in *Tâl'es*. This last is, of course, common knowledge, but the Ghost dance is the only *kusiut* ceremonial in which such information is used in the text of a song. Details are given, but the wording is so ambiguous that when the uninitiated later hear the song they do not comprehend its meaning. Since the *kusiut* have concealed the error referred to, the necessity for veiled allusions is apparent. Everything connected with the Ghost dance is carried out in the reverse order; thus, the reference of X to presents which he did not receive is merely an intimation that he will presently bestow gifts on the singers and the other *kusiut* who have assisted him. The wordless chorus of the tune consists of *'aiye'aiyaia*, a phrase said to be the same for Ghost dances among all the coastal tribes. The singers practise this song while the audience listens attentively; then it is sung vigorously by all, while X dances. His style differs from that of all other *kusiut*; first one arm and then the other is kept extended, downwards, at an angle in front of the body with the forefinger pointing to the ground. This method of dancing is the prerogative of all Ghost dancers and provides a variation to the somewhat monotonous performances on different

the one that takes place at a thunder-storm, is said to "make good the path" of the patron. It would formerly have been a very serious offence for a Sun dancer not to perform at an eclipse; his failure would probably have been punished with death by the marshals. One informant vividly recalled his fears when he failed to perform at an eclipse soon after his conversion to Christianity, and mentioned that he had been in deadly peril from the marshals in spite of the white man's law.

THE MOON DANCE

The Sun is not the only heavenly body that acts as patron to *kuxint* dancers, the Moon also has many human protégés. Among them is *Nalwindo*, "The Moon When It Is Unobserved," of *Tremsil*, from whom the following account of the Moon dance was obtained. As usual, he can be spoken of as X.

The Moon dance can take place at any time during the ceremonial season, subject, of course, to X's wishes and the consent of the marshals. The coming of the call is heralded in the usual manner and the *kuxint* presently assemble to learn the song just composed. It describes the following supernatural beings:

Aslaldzem:[1] A woman who lives in the moon and who can be seen in certain of its phases, always carrying a bucket of water.

The two *Alpmaiast*: These two beings are able periodically to blacken the Moon's face, thus causing an eclipse.

The two *Sa'xmdo-e*:[2] These kindly women clean the Moon's face after it has been blackened. It is these beings who come to earth to assist stricken *kuxint*.

The song also describes how no supernatural being dares to pass the Moon's house during an eclipse, a prohibition similar to that obeyed by uninitiated with regard to passing outside a house where a *kuxint* ceremony is taking place.

[1] *Aslaldzem* is the usual term for ghost; no reason was given for the application of the same designation to the woman living in the moon.

[2] There is difference of opinion among the Bella Coola as to whether or not there is more than one of these beings.

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(aa) Referring to a spot outside Smith Inlet.
(bb) That is: *Tlelaek'ak'* had just stilled the rough sea. She was another of Sqoinee's first ancestors, the most powerful of a group of four consisting of her brothers, *Nais'alwas*, *Tlewaits'ik*, and *Tlelaelis*, and of herself.
(cc) Sqoinee's house, a reference to an incident in Sqoinee's ancestral myth.
(dd) The house contained whistles and other valuables which they obtained.
(ee) That is: All people, everywhere, know of *Nais'alwas* and *Tlewaiks'ik*. Each name, though singular, has a plural significance since the other brothers are likewise implied.
(ff) Referring again to the band of first settlers.
(gg) A place on the mainland opposite the north end of Vancouver Island.

Song Used for Sinupsil(a)

A Yau kā'ɛmaiɛdimɛndɛx	*dɛnɛlɛldɛitmā'ldɛlɛ*	*yau ikāilɛkɛdɛimɛdɛɛx*
They(*b*) will presently inform(*c*)	my dead relatives(*d*)	when they reach
yau alāltɛmɛnɛiqɛlɛtɛɛx	*dɛ∫ukdjudjīmɛltsidɛx*	*dɛalɛltpɛmāthɛmdɛx*
the outer places(*e*);	they(*f*) see(*g*)	where they first came down.

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

B Kɛɛ-ɛmbɛlɛm-itɛmɛlɛɛx	*aiyɛwɛmaiɛtɛlɛmɛlɛ*	*dhɛɛtɛlɛinɛɛsklidɛx*
I clothe myself with(*h*)	my ancestral myth,	as it was
dɛɛchɛtsiye-mɛklidɛx	*gɛlɛmɛnɛ∫ɛnɛm-ɛlɛtsklidɛx*	*aiyɛlɛmtsɛl'ɛlɛwɛdɛx*
in the time	of the *Nunu∫mɛlɛ*(*i*)	house.

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

C Skɛmɛlɛwɛhɛmmɛɛɛxɛmkʷ	*dɛɛqɛnɛɛtɛmɛɛtlɛɛnɛdɛɛx*	*ɛɛmɛlɛ∫ɛwɛlɛɛlɛ*
Had just emerged(*j*)	the place where our relatives get their food(*k*).	
Aiyɛdɛɛmɛlɛɛyɛɛx	*ɛɛlɛhlɛxlɛlɛmɛɛt-ɛklɛdɛx*	*aiyɛɛwɛkɛɛ-ɛdɛx*
Thither went	when it became dry(*l*)	*Wā'ɛkɛ*.
Siɛlkiyɛklɛdɛlɛɛndɛx	*dɛɛɛ'ɛɛqɛɛn-ɛɛmklɛdɛɛl*	*aiyɛɛtmɛɛn-ɛklɛdɛl*
That is why	all people, everywhere, know	of my ancestors(*m*).

(*a*) Recorded as song VII D 37, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard. Both words and tune were composed by him about 1907.
(*b*) Referring to *Wā'ɛkɛ* and his band, (I, p. 350). *Sinupsil* was descended from this group of first people.
(*c*) The significance of this word is stronger than *inform*. It means that *Wā'ɛkɛ* will relate to the deceased their ancestral myth.
(*d*) The chief for whom this song was composed had lost several relatives.
(*e*) Referring to Goose Island, *Yɛl-ɛɛlɛix*, where *Wā'ɛkɛ* landed.
(*f*) Referring again to the deceased.
(*g*) The significance of this word is stronger than *see*. It means that those recently dead will gaze with rapture on the places which belong to them owing to their ancestral myth.

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Then she sat down to the meal with her husband, the routine being exactly as she had described it to her victim. After they had finished eating, *Snux*'s wife told him of the day's happenings, how a woman, giving her name, had visited the camp and had asked a great many questions about him, including whether or not he observed ceremonial chastity, and other personal matters. 539*

"What did you tell her?" *Snux* asked his wife.

"Oh, I answered her truthfully," she replied.

"You should never have done that!" *Snux* burst out in anger. "It was none of her business. Don't you know that you should never discuss a hunter's observance of ceremonial chastity? You have behaved very badly." [715 791]

Snux had reason for his wrath, because no wife should ever discuss this matter, as in so doing she weakens or destroys her husband's power.

A few days afterward the evil woman again visited *Snux*'s camp, carrying concealed beneath her blanket a wooden club used for killing salmon. *Snux*'s wife did not see the approach of her hypocritical friend, who struck her on the head with the weapon and killed her. The murderess dragged her victim's body a short distance from the camp; with her copper knife she removed the skin and drew it over her own body, endeavouring in every way to make it fit. But the wife of *Snux* had been larger than the bad woman, who tried to remedy the difference in size by tying the excess in wrinkles around her hips. The greatest difficulty was about the eyes, where the skin hung in folds which the impostor sewed neatly to make less noticeable. When all was done the murderess scraped a hole in the soft ground and buried the body of her victim.

While awaiting the return of *Snux* the impostor busied herself in carrying out all the small household occupations, just as she had been told about them. Towards dusk *Snux* came back. He noticed that his wife looked peculiar and uneasy, but said nothing about it; they sat down together to the meal but the woman kept her eyes lowered, lest the loose skin about them might betray her. *Snux* wondered at that and also at her voice, which did not sound normal. At night the masquerader went first to bed, as a wife always does when her husband is observing ceremonial chastity. *Snux* followed shortly. In a few minutes an owl hooted:

"*Snux*'s wife has tied up a fold of skin round her hips."

Neither man nor woman spoke. Even at that distant period it was well known that the voice of a dead person passes into an owl, though only rarely can one communicate with the living. It was, in fact, the slain wife speaking from above the spot where her body lay. The murderess feared that *Snux* would put his arm around her waist, but she was saved because his observance of ceremonial chastity prevented him from doing so. [775 825]

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Anuhkk: Village near mouth of the Dean River.
Anuhkkim: Man mentioned in an ancient story.
Anutsyaa-yut, "Lobetted": Village in the lower Bella Coola valley.
Anuxwhaix: Name obtained by an *Alpaklaut* man in the beginning of time.
Anuyahumut, "Quivering To and Fro": One of *Tlitcpalitse-a's* names and hence a designation given to shamans.
Anuxinukhs: *Kuxlut* name of a Bella Coola man.
Anuxinuta-a: 1—*Kuxlut* name of a Bella Coola woman.
2—"Left Hand": *Stuxe* repository named from part of a supernatural creature.
[431]
[426] *anuyap':* Term applied to the giving of a copper, indicating that 100 per cent interest is expected in return.
Anuxlumukmut: One of the names of Great Blue Heron as chief.
[463] *anuxwinkaw-aix:* *Kuxlut* profession, at Kimsquit only, of throwing masks on the fire.
Anuxwinkmuk, "The Moving House": One of the names of the supreme god's dwelling.
anuyus: 1—Owner of a puppet-patron.
2—Synonym for *skumdumutsum,* q.v.
Anuyalhkailaix: Supernatural being who rules *kukuxlut* of their thoughts at the Mystery dance.
Ao-ai: 1—Name created for himself by one of the first settlers at *Alpaklaut* in the beginning of time.
2—Bella Bella chief.
apa: Excreta.
Apaka, "The Privy One": Name taken by a chief for himself in virtue of the remarks made about his habits.
Apalais: *Xuxut* name of a Kimsquit man.
[825] *apam:* Herring eggs.
[824] *apmeuxlp:* Cottonwood.
apna: Type of sea-going canoe.
[825] *apnu:* Harlequin duck.
Apaitsiyutmaxmum, "The Constant Eater": Term used by hunters to Eagle.
Aqua-ta-i, "Concave Town": Village in the middle Bella Coola valley.
aq-awuxtp: Canoes lashed together.
Ar-ar: Locality on south side of North Bentinck Arm, about one-quarter mile from its head, including the area beneath the surface of the water.
[601] *ar-tha-at:* 1—Second oldest sibling.
2—Second part of song.
[775] *arixitmum:* 1—"They Who Have Become Supernatural": Title preferred by ghosts.
2—Woman living in the moon.
Ar-ixmamp: Inhabitants of the village of *Ar-a°.*
[424] *ar-ummaxius:* Person with good memory commissioned to remember family prerogatives.
Ar-a°, "At the Head": Village southwest of the head of South Bentinck Arm.
askuxit: Totem-pole, *literally,* "Outside Post."
[752] *askuxlum:* Shaman with power derived from ghosts.
aslaluxum: Ceremonial bathing at dawn.
[515] *Aslhaxailaix:* *Kuxlut* name of a Bella Coola woman.
Aslxuklk: *Kuxlut* name of a Bella Coola man.

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Ahiaxsa: One of the first men to settle on the upper Kimsquit River in the beginning of time.

Ahkaml: Unidentified town on the outer coast mentioned in a *dinse* story of the beginning of time.

Ahkhkamdimut: Name acquired by one of the first settlers at *Dsaldi* in the beginning of time.

Ahkumsiwa: *Smoose's* son in the beginning of time.

Ahlsi'i: Small portable canoe.

Ahlsmas: Desertion of a spouse.

Ahnaxmai: 1—"The Copper One."
2—"Snow," in the language of Deer.

Ahnamakyuse: Imitation potlatch carried out by *nuxalkmc*.

Ahnaw: Bella Bella Cannibal living in the beginning of time.

Ahlawaimut, "The Scatterer of Eagle Down": Name created by *Smoose* for his son in the beginning of time.

Aima: To lose.

Ainlaiklaks: Bella Bella supernatural being who brings food.

Airwaimut: Person of placid disposition.

Akdin: Bull-roarer.

Ak!: To excite rut; the word for potlatch, *Am*, is supposedly derived from this.

Am: Potlatch.

Amkmid: The binding down of a Cannibal with rope.

Amalin: Unidentified autumn moon, probably the fourth after the summer solstice.

Amalis di Nuxtekmc, "The Potlatch of the *nuxtekmc*": Second moon after winter solstice.

Amaxtala, "First of All": One of the first men to settle at *Nuklo* in the beginning of time.

Amkwaklas: Shaman's ritual error, such as the curing of one who is ceremonially unclean.

Amnukuta: Miniature totem-pole such as is used in mourning ceremony.

Amtokwas: Partnership of a poor man with a chief about to give a potlatch, so that the former may repay debts, for which his poverty required no compensation, and thus start himself on the path towards greatness.

Amtsimlim: The turning over of a mountain.

An'ya: Professional name of a female berry-picker.

Apaxkalus: Stick decorated with copper bangles used in mourning rites by one of the first settlers at *Kwiyai* in the beginning of time.

Apic: The painting of the face as a sign of mourning.

'Elaxdimut: Cannibal *kwicut* name used by the first settlers at *Bella* in the beginning of time.

Elqiyaum: *Kwicut* name of a Bella Coola male Screetcher.

Eskkai: Aversion.

Estwala: 1—*Kwicut* name of a *Tsimsut* man.
2—Shamanistic power.

Esthahmut: Visitation from the life of a recently dead friend, notification of which is conveyed by a start or other feeling of discomfort.

Estqaus-i: *Kwicut* name of a Kimsquit man. The first to use this designation was a relative of the earliest settlers in the beginning of time.

Estsiwalaitsem, "The Giver of Shamanistic Power": One of the names of *Tsimsp-Sisera*, and hence a designation given to shamans.

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miswinkwip: Leaf of salalberry.
mis-mulyat: 1—Omen of misfortune, such as preceded the outbreak of smallpox, hence, [824] [787]
2—Smallpox.
mitla: Type of sea-going canoe with raised prow and small stern.
mose, mosatie, mosus: Child. [601]
Mosukulu: Supreme god when addressed in prayer.
mud': Excreta.
mumuts, mutsiw, mumutsid-i: Ancestral family, practically equivalent to children when used by an old person. [614]
mus'kwomasta: The commemoration of a chief's potlatches and other major ceremonies by means of plain posts erected near his grave. [211]
Mustus-ewam, Tide-Measurer: A supernatural being. [764]
Mutsulu: Man mentioned in a song.
Mylelelis: Supernatural being who gives potency to *nusuk* rites.
mylistu: Grandiloquent expression used by the *kukwis'ut* with reference to the way in which supernatural beings govern the length of human lives. [776]
mutlelwim: 1—The condition of being within range of speech and vision. The term is used to describe relations formerly existing between the dead and the living. [775]
2—To visit, term used with reference to the coming of a masked representation of a dead person; the significance is similar to that expressed in the first meaning.
mul': Pounded, dyed cedar-bark used to decorate ceremonial objects.
mulwuk: Head-ring of cedar-bark worn by *kwisa'* initiates in the upper Bella Coola valley.
mupis: Lice. [825]
mupsila: Adolescent youth.
murmurk': Blue grouse.
murmurkhkhtsuls: Dentalium-shell ear-rings worn by adolescent girls during seclusion. [301]
mus: Hand net for catching olachen. [227]
mus'zwhalus: Yellow cedar staves decorated with swan feathers such as is carried by a Mystery dancer.
mustumus: Wrestling.
Musuwa: Rivers Inlet man living in the last century.

N

Nais'alwus: One of the first men to settle at Smith Inlet in the beginning of time.
Na'mus: Bella Bella village; the Anglicized form is Namu.
naw: Grizzly bear. [825]
Nawaulis: Name received from Grizzly Bear by a Kimsquit man in the beginning of time.
Nawaus: *Kwakiut* name of a *Nuxalk* man.
Nawaxlwus: One of the first men to settle at *Xnoa* in the beginning of time.
Nayilkwaiuk: One of the names of Mount *Nuxalk* as chief.
naw-nus: Non-ceremonial weeping, usually individual, and always with real feeling. [827]
Nawu: Indeterminate locality in the distant east. [152]

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nemas, nemtlis, nemsmis: Member of same sex and same exogamal family as speaker. [601]

Nemiskim: Supernatural being who comes with *Nusiqamu* to bring a call to the latter's protégé. [614]

Nemsilakmut: One of the names of Great Blue Heron as chief.

nemtl: 1—A passage, especially the digestive tract. [826]
2—Laudatory adjective applied to chiefs, referring to goods distributed.

nemtsmaklis: Toilet-hole.

nemtsiwam: Recompense, virtually pay, given to carpenters and other craftsmen at a mourning ceremony. [465]

nemxaltmamas: Exchange marriage. [583]

nempishlhum: Passenger.

Ne-mit: Place near Nulmas.

Nemtemskin: *Kwixt* name created by *xpayaya* at Kimsquit in the beginning of time.

nemumi di mimas: Half-brother or sister with different mother from speaker. [601]

nemumi ti atimas: Half-brother or sister with different father from speaker.

Nemuna'ax, "The Inhospitable One": Name taken by a wife in consequence of slights received from her husband's relatives.

Nemutmamut: One of the four supernatural eagle-like creatures.

Nemxdjiyum: Supernatural being who created repositories in the beginning of time.

Nemxlamut: One of the four supernatural eagle-like creatures.

Nemxlpiyum: House occupied by the first settlers at *Nusiqamu* in the beginning of time.

nemx'ntimut: The use of potent medicines after eating a giant toad.

nemxlmamtmas or *nemxlmamtimut*: 1—The giving of hemlock-bark and dyed cedar-bark to *Nusiqalilas*. [782]
2—The making of offerings to ghosts by the casting of food on a fire. [775]

Nemxmo'ok: One of the four supernatural eagle-like creatures.

Nemxnaiskilimut: Male supernatural being who travels with *Nusiqamu*, takes charge of the singers who also accompany him, and sometimes dances happily.

Nemxsaks: Mother Nature.

nemxyp: Fisherman with inherited right to use of a salmon-weir or of a place for catching sturgeon. [424]

nemxyumxumxmis, "A Calling Back", or "A Seizing": Term applied to the death of a chief in the belief that it is due to the supernatural evilness having come down to carry him off. The word is often added to their designation. [224] [761]

Nemxyumxti, "Where Water Entered": House of one of the first groups of settlers at Kimsquit in the beginning of time.

Nemxyuxsmis: *Kwixt* name of a Bella Coola man.

Nemxyuxhlaiyas-a: Professional name of a female dancer.

Nemxyuxtmam: Supernatural being; this is probably a synonym for one of the Carpenters.

Nemxhmut: *Kwixt* name of a Bella Coola man.

Nemxmumut: One of the four supernatural eagle-like creatures.

Nemxsemuhl: Kimsquit hunter mentioned in an ancient story.

Nemxtlhemmun, "The One that Penetrates to the Head of the Rivers": Supernatural name of sockeye salmon. [825]

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go with the mother and part with the father. The decision is left to the parents and children. 586

When a person has died the corpse is washed, the face painted red, the legs are doubled up, and the arms folded over the breast. The nose-ornament of the deceased is put into his nose; his shirt is put on, the back part covering the breast and the front part turned backward. The body is placed in a box and the latter is either fastened on the lower branches of a tree or placed in a little house, which is set on posts, above the level of the ground. The face of the deceased is turned eastward. Part of his property and gifts from his friends are deposited near the grave. The masks of the deceased are burnt. His crest is carved on a memorial column, which also shows how many canoes, coppers, head-dresses, and slaves he had given away at potlatches. These objects are painted or carved on the columns. Formerly slaves were killed at the burial of chiefs. The number of slaves killed was also indicated by so many human figures on the memorial column. After burial food for the use of the deceased is thrown into the fire. This is repeated frequently during a prolonged period after the death has occurred. Whenever the friends of the deceased partake of a meal a little food is thrown down at a place between the fire and the door, where the entrance to the lower world, the home of the dead, is believed to be. 764 [301] [823] [766] [567] [775]

The bed of a mourner must be protected against the ghost of the deceased. His male relatives stick a thorn-bush into the ground at each corner of their beds. After four days these are thrown into the water. Mourners must rise early and go into the woods, where they stick four thorn-bushes into the ground, at the corners of a square, in which they cleanse themselves by rubbing their bodies with cedar-branches. They also swim in ponds. After swimming they cleave four small trees and creep through the clefts, following the course of the sun. This they do on four subsequent mornings, cleaving new trees every day. Mourners cut their hair short. The hair that has been cut off is burnt. If they should not observe these regulations it is believed that they would dream of the deceased. Women when mourning scratch their cheeks with shells or stones. 765 783 [775] 765 [302]

The mourning regulations for a widower or a widow are especially strict. For four days he (or she) must fast, and must not speak a word, else the dead wife or husband would lay a hand on the mouth of the offender, who would then die. They must not go near water, and are forbidden to catch or eat salmon for a whole year. For the same length of time they must not eat fresh herring or olachen. Widow and widower cleanse themselves in the same way as other mourners. Their shadows are considered unlucky, and must not fall on any person. [262] [828] [822]

Some time after the death of a rich or influential person his nearest relative invites the whole tribe to a potlatch. On this occasion he sings a mourning song for the deceased and gives away presents to his guests. It was explained to me that this ended the mourning, and that it was 'the same as giving away the bones of the deceased.' 765 556

Religion and Shamanism.

The mythology of the Bilqula differs greatly from the mythologies of the other tribes of the North Pacific coast. It is impossible to say to 773 171

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lished some remarks on the religious life of the Bella Coola in 1886,[1] which, however, contain so many misconceptions that they cannot be used to advantage. At the same time I published a brief description of the tribe, based on information received from a small group of members of the tribe who were travelling in Germany. In this description also there are a number of misconceptions. The Indians were shown a collection of masks from Vancouver Island with which they were not familiar. They gave, however, explanations of these masks, judging by the similarity to masks of their own tribe; consequently the explanations given there are not correct.[2] In 1890 I fell in with a number of Bella Coola who were fishing for salmon in Fraser River. The information obtained from them was published in the reports of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1891.[3] A. Jacobsen published a description of their ceremonies in 1891.[4] Fillip Jacobsen described some of their traditions and customs in 1894 and 1895.[5] I published a collection of traditions in 1894 and 1895.[6]

III.

All the collections which have been made heretofore do not bring out clearly the principal characteristic of the mythology of the Bella Coola. The tribes of the North Pacific coast consider the Sun as the most important deity, but at the same time they believe in a great many beings of supernatural power. For this reason their whole mythology is very unsystematic. The Bella Coola, on the other hand, have developed a peculiar mythology, in which a number of supernatural beings have been co-ordinated. A system has been evolved which justifies our terming the supernatural beings "deities." The general features of this system are as follows:—

The Bella Coola believe that there are five worlds, one above another. The middle one is our own world, the earth. Above it are spanned two heavens, while below it there are two underworlds. In the upper heaven resides the supreme deity, a woman who interferes comparatively little with the fates of mankind. In the centre of the lower heaven, that is in the zenith, stands the house of the gods, in which reside the Sun and all the other deities. Our own earth is an island swimming in the ocean. The underworld is inhabited by the ghosts, who are at liberty to return to heaven, whence they may be sent down again to our earth. The ghosts

[1] Original-Mittheilungen aus dem königlichen Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin, 1886, pp. 193-180.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 177-184.
[3] Seventh Report of the Committee on the Northwestern Tribes of Canada, pp. 2-18; Report of the 61st Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Cardiff, 1891, pp. 405-449.
[4] Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, 1891, pp. 383-391.
[5] Ymer, Tidskrift utgifven af Svenska Sällskapet för Anthropologi och Geografi, 1894, pp. 177-208; 1895, pp. 1-23.
[6] Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, 1894, pp. 201-326; 1895, pp. 189-295.

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772 who die a second death sink to the lowest world, from which there is no
[775] return.

The upper heaven is called Atsa'axl., or Snutx·lak·'a'la ti Sónx· t'aix·, or
[774] Sónxaiu· Onq'ó'mkilik·a. The deity ruling there is a woman who is called
Qamá'its, or Tsi sisnáaxit. ("our woman"), or Ek·!yuk·imtóla'it. ("afraid
of nothing").

772 This heaven is described as a prairie without any trees. It is said that
776 in order to reach it one must go up the river from the house of the gods
in the lower heaven. In another tradition it is said that in travelling from
the lower heaven to the upper heaven one has to pass the rent in the sky
which is called Tsi.na'lótas ti Sónx· t'aix·. The house of the supreme deity
stands in the far east, and a gale is continually blowing over the open country,
driving every thing towards the entrance of her house. Near the house,
however, it is calm. In front of the house stands a post in the shape of a
large winged monster, and its mouth is the entrance to the house. In front
of the house-door there is gravel of three colors,—blue, black, and white.
Behind the house is a salt-water pond in which the goddess bathes. In this
pond lives the st'siut. or xtsaltsalo'sem. This being sometimes descends to
our world. Wherever it moves, the rocks burst, and slide down the sides
of the mountains. It is described as a snake or a fish (see pp. 44, 66).

773 In the beginning of the world the mountains were of great height.
823 They were human beings who made the world uninhabitable. Qamá'its
made war upon the mountains. She vanquished them, and made them
smaller than they used to be. During this fight she broke off the nose of
the mountain Yólyulx'mi., which is situated near Nut.!a'l. Its face may be
recognized even now; and the Indians say that when its name is called, it
answers. There are two mountains near the head-waters of Bella Coola
River. The one is called Slex·lékoal'i.; the other one, Na'axl. The for-
mer had a fire, called Snutsi'k·nimsta, burning in his house. This fire
warned him of the approach of enemies. When Qamá'its made war upon
the mountains, the fire warned its master. Qamá'its was coming down the
river in her canoe, which is named "T!kun." When she approached, he
broke her canoe, and she returned to heaven. The canoe has been trans-
formed into stone, and may be seen to this day at the foot of the mountain
Slex·lékoal'i.. It is said that Qamá'its visits the earth every now and then.
Her visits cause sickness and death. She is described as a great warrior.

772 In the centre of the lower heaven, which is called Sónx·, stands the
776 house of the gods. This house is named Nuama'ts (the House of Myths),
or Nusk!oalana!x·sta ("where man was created"), or Nusk·lalaa'mats
("the house from which people come down"), or Nusqilxoal'x·sta ("the
house to which people go"). In front of the house stands a post called
Nulasi'k·ts. It is painted with representations of all kinds of birds. A

have to put the firewood. This opening is called K'awa'amsta, that is, "mouth kept open by means of a wedge." Mamnoalt'aix spoke: "The sky shall not burst again. This wedge shall keep its mouth open." The following ka'aiat song refers to these deities:— 776 821 [539]

Ai'aaxs ti maamal' tlexts ti ai'ax'ugel t'ats
Aiitx ti maamal' la. ti K'awa'amsta ti tlaxs t'ats.
Ilx'a yalx'ux ti al'laal ti maatal'.
Ilx'a mulqx ux tzamal'x ti K'awa'amsta ti tlaxs t'aix ti maatal.

("My child perished like the sky when it broke.
Go to K'awa'amsta of the sky, my child!
Gladden my heart, my child!
Sit down in the mouth of the sky, my child!")

Our world is called A'atkil'ax, or Qaak'vhat, that is, "the land below." It is an island swimming in the boundless ocean. In the far east a giant is sitting with legs apart, who is called Asxp!alaxtaaix'. He holds a long stone bar in his outstretched hands. The earth is fastened to this stone bar by means of two stone ropes. Sometimes he gets tired, and moves his hands to take better hold of the stone bar. Then we have an earthquake: and the Bella Coola say, "Saaaik'qstak'inaxa," that is, "he takes hold of our world." When he moves our earth westward, we have epidemics. When he moves it eastward, all sickness disappears. 772 776 823 [731] [753]

In the ocean lives a being called Sclaiis, who twice every day swallows the water of the sea and gives it forth again. This is the cause of the tides. A mask representing this being appears in the ka'aiat ceremonial. He is represented as a human being, the face of which is painted with white stripes, which symbolize the various levels of the sea.

The world below us is the country of the ghosts (kalk'lolx'max). It is called Asiatl'axm. Descriptions of the ghosts' country are principally obtained from shamans who believe they have visited that country during a trance. According to the statement of an old woman who believed that as a little girl she had visited the country of the ghosts during a trance, the entrance to the country of the ghosts is through a hole situated in each house, between the doorway and the fireplace. The country of the ghosts stretches along the sandy banks of a large river. There is a hill behind their village, the base of which is covered with sharp stones. When it is summer here, it is winter there. When it is night here, it is day there. The ghosts do not walk on their feet, but on their heads. Their language is different from the one spoken on earth. The souls, on reaching the lower world, receive new names. The village of the ghosts is said to be surrounded by a fence. They have a dancing-house, in which they perform 772 775 [756] [787]

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their kl'aut. It is just below the burial-place of each village. The dancing-house is very large and long. It has four fires. The women stay on the floor of the house, while the men sit on an elevated platform. The houses have doors, but the ghosts who first reach the lower world enter the house through the smoke-hole. A rope ladder placed in the smoke-hole facilitates their entrance. Two men stand at the foot of the ladder. They are called Anxet.'axnatal'x. For a person who has once entered the dancing-house there is no return to our earth. The souls are at liberty to return to the lower heaven, which they reach by ascending the rope ladder. Those who return to the lower heaven are sent back to our earth by the deities, to be born as children in the same family to which they belonged. Those who enjoy life in the country of the ghosts, and who do not return to heaven, die a second death, and then sink to the second lower world, from which there is no return.

I received another description from an old man. He stated that he reached the country in his canoe. He saw two trails,—one the trail of the living, one that of the dead. He followed the trail of the dead, and reached a village in which there was a dancing-house. The language of the ghosts differed from that of the living (see p. 41).

The Bella Coola believe that in the far west is situated the land of the salmon, which is called Mia'tlem. The salmon leave this country early in the spring every year, and ascend the rivers. They are believed to return to their own country in the fall. The following tradition is of importance, explaining the manner in which the salmon were first brought from their country to the rivers of our world:—

Once upon a time a man named Wiawi'us lived at Q!a'mqstis. One day he was sitting in front of his house, looking at the river. He thought, "I wish fish would ascend this river." At that time not a single salmon visited Bella Coola River. Wiawi'us entered his house and lay down, thinking about the salmon. One night while he was asleep he dreamt that with the help of all the animals he had made war upon the salmon, that he had vanquished them, and that since that time the salmon had ascended Bella Coola River. When he awoke he invited all the animals to his house, and told them about his dream. They all came, and when they had entered he shut the door. Then he spoke: "My brothers, I have invited you to my house that you may hear what I wish to do. You shall help me to obtain what I desire." The Mink asked him in what they were to assist him; and he replied, "I want to go to Mia'tlem. There is not a single fish in our river, and I dreamt that with your help I vanquished the fish. Let us make war upon them. I shall certainly take some slaves, and we will place them in this river." Mink retorted, "I am glad that you are speaking,

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Some of these he gives to the shaman. . . . A third spirit is the Skaia [Sxaī'exmx], which is believed to live in rivers and to have the shape of a salmon. When a shaman who is inspired by his spirit makes an incantation in a house, singing and dancing, as all the shamans do, whoever approaches the house and hears the song turns back. They believe that whoever passes the house during the incantation will be punished with death by the spirit Skaia."

I believe this spirit is identical with LAIAit., who, as stated before, has the second name Sxaī'exmx. According to Jacobsen, some shamans are initiated by the ghosts. He says that the ghosts are believed to have bald heads and blue faces. I am under the impression, however, that the people initiated by them are not shamans, but kusiut dancers (see Chap. VI).

Another being who initiates shamans is described in the following tradition:—

Once upon a time there was a man and a woman who had four sons. The three elder ones died. Then the father and mother and the youngest brother were very unhappy, and the old people cried for grief until they died. The young man was now left all alone. He left his village, intending to go away and never to return. He pulled his blanket over his head and walked on. Sometimes he would stop to pray. He lived on the meat of mountain-goats which he shot. He built a small hut high up on the mountains, and dried the meat. He was crying and praying all the time. He prayed to the Sun to give him a gift which would restore his happiness. One day early in the morning he ascended the mountain. He addressed the rising Sun, saying, "Look at me how unhappy I am." After he had gone a short distance he came to a ravine. The bed of the ravine was filled with pretty pebbles. There he met a beautiful man who was no other than the Sun, who had descended from the sky. He had caused the water of the creek that runs through the ravine to disappear. When the young man saw the stranger from a distance, he thought, "He seems to be looking for me." He went nearer; and when they met, the Sun said, "I am the one to whom you are praying all the time, and I came to help you. Now be happy. When you open your mouth and speak to me, I know your thoughts at once. I help those who address themselves to me. Take this." With these words he handed the young man a switch carved in the shape of a man. The Sun was carrying it under his arm, the point of the switch directed downward. "Fold your arms and hold this switch to your chest, and then return to the village. When you approach any one, hide the switch under your arm. You will find a person who wears a nose-ornament of beautiful green color. Then you must try to hit the ornament with this switch, and throw it to your right side."